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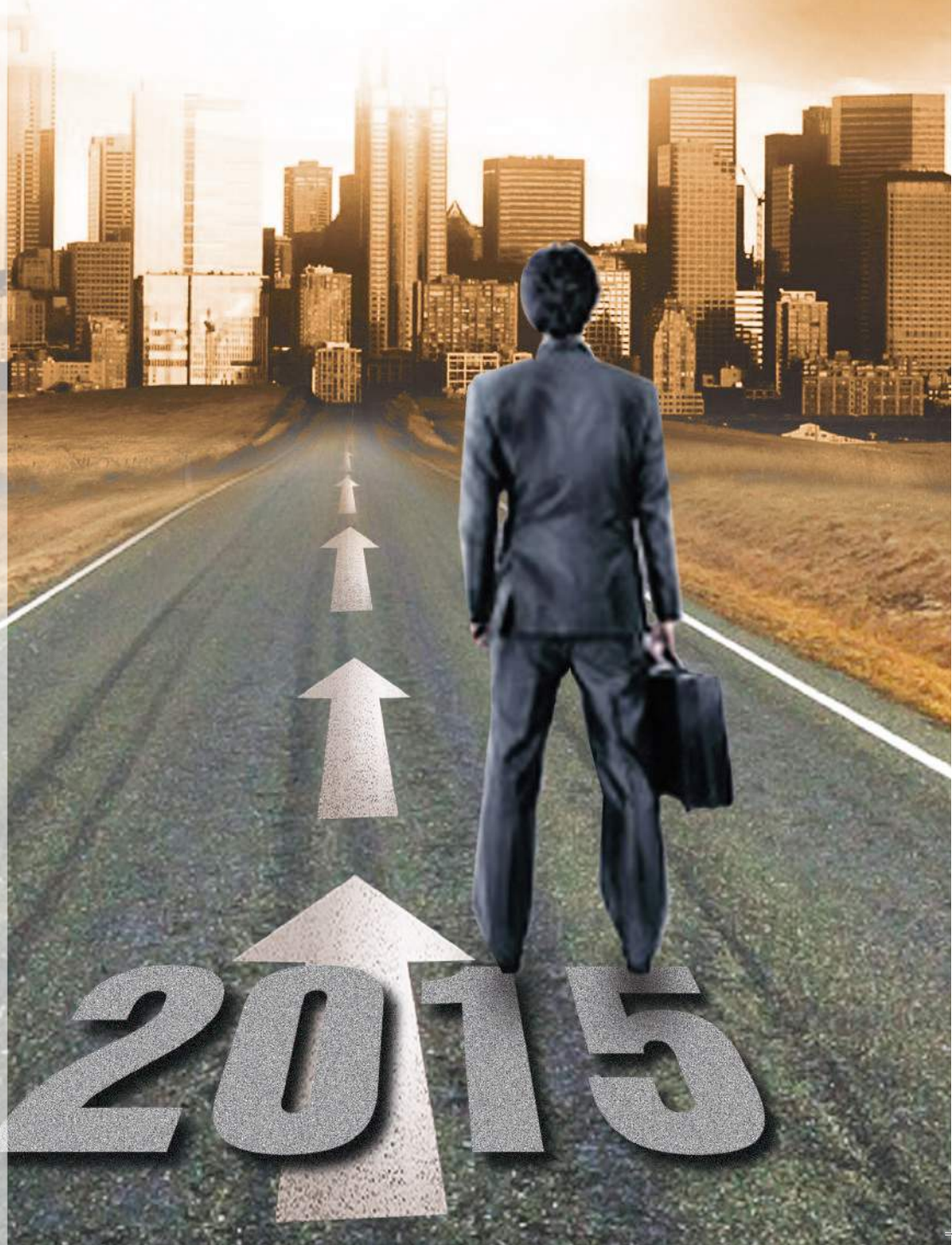
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF HOTEL &  
RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION (WESTERN INDIA)

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**JANUARY  
2015**

# Road Ahead

## Hospitality Industry 2015





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## President's Note

**Dear fellow Hoteliers and Restaurateurs,**

**W**elcome to 2015. It is the beginning of the New Year and with it comes new hope and beginnings. This is also the beginning for the planning of the Budget session for the government. The Association is making a pre-budget memorandum to submit to the Central Government through the office of the FHRAI. We encourage all our members to send their suggestions to the office of the Association so that we are able to cover the same in our representation to the Government.

The Executive Committee has meetings planned in Ahmedabad, Mahabaleshwar, Mumbai and Goa over the next few months. We once again encourage all the local members of the region to attend these meetings and give us your feedback on the state of the industry in your region as well as any suggestions for the improvement of the working of your Association.

January also brings the festival of Makar Sankranti. A festival celebrated in Gujarat and Maharashtra extensively. Gujarat will also host the Vibrant Gujarat summit of world leaders and we hope that such activities will encourage more tourism and growth for the industry.

We expect the Indian Government to announce a slew of investor friendly schemes and a positive growth driven budget. We look forward to an era of less Government and more Governance with sharp reduction in number of operating licenses required for our industry. We look forward to a bright 2015 and wish a prosperous year to all our member. ■

**Bharat Malkhani,**  
President HRAWI

## NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK



**S**ummer Harvest - A heaven for foodies; home to vegetarian and non-vegetarian varieties of Indian food, Tandoori savouries, Chinese cuisine and authentic finger-licking Malvani food, They serve the much loved Malvani cuisine at Sindhu, and give you a home-like feel with their service and taste. A popular hangout for Marathi actors and theatre personalities, Summer Harvest is definitely the place for the love of food!



Address: Sharda Bhuvan, Nanda Patkar Road, Vile Parle East, Mumbai, Maharashtra.



**T**he SSK Solitaire Hotel & Banquets is a contemporary compact boutique hotel offering unparalleled convenience. It offers 18 elegantly designed rooms, 2 Audio "Visually equipped modern acoustic banquet halls, An Alfresco Garden Restaurant, A Fine Dining Multi Cuisine Restaurant, Health Club and Spa, also has a 24\*7 Coffee shop.

Address: Ahilyabai Holkar Marg, Tidke Colony, Nasik, Maharashtra.



**R**evival Restaurant is the paradise of unlimited servings for every vegetarian, with over 900 dishes per month and 30 items served on the Thali menu every day. The restaurant has the perfect atmosphere for a relaxing experience over lunch or dinner. With the "Manwar" style of service in the restaurant, you will always feel like a king being served at home. The entire food is made with trans fat-free oils and pure ghee.



Address: 39-B, Chowpatty Seaface, Mumbai, Maharashtra.



Address: 2, Devang Park, Panjarapole Char Rasta, Ambawadi, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

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**H**otel Orient is a 55 room hotel for the traveller on a budget. All the rooms are elegantly furnished with Air-conditioner, Refrigerator and LCD Television. They serve daily Complimentary Continental Buffet and Breakfast. The other facilities available are Laundry Service, Car Parking and WI-FI. The hotel is centrally located in the heart of South Mumbai 7 Minutes from Mumbai Central Railway Station and 4 kms from CST Station and is about 25 kms from Domestic and International Airport. It is surrounded by major shopping areas and restaurants.



Address: 299 / 301, Maulana Shaukat Ali Road, Near Shalimar Cinema, Grant Road East, Mumbai, Maharashtra



GOA

From Feb 14 to Feb 17,  
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and join in. So should you!

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## HRAWI Initiates Responsible New Year's Celebrations

**Requested all Hotels and Restaurants In The City To Maintain Enough Security, Keep Taxis Queued**

In light of rising incidences of crime, especially against women, the Hotel and Restaurant Association Of Western India (HRAWI), had initiated a drive for safe and responsible new year celebrations. As part of the drive, the association has requested all its members to additionally ensure security at respective premises and also keep taxis queued for customers to drive home safe. A letter to this effect had been circulated across all hotels and restaurants across all its member states in the western region that includes Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Diu-Daman and Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The drive had been initiated not just for the safety of women but as precautionary arrangements in case of unforeseen incidences.

“New Year's is one of the most celebrated festivals in the world. Patrons come to hotels and restaurants to leave behind the previous year and usher in the new one with revelry and hope. Hotels provide the space, comfort and convenience for people to welcome the first day of the New Year, where like-minded people come together for celebrations,” says Mr. Bharat Malkani, President, HRAWI.

“Where there is much celebration and crowd, the need for security and safety in general also becomes doubly important. We are certain that Mumbai police is quite capable of handling any unforeseen incidences however, on our part, we wish to take precautionary measures for additional safety and security. We are also concerned, especially with the safety of women patrons and so all our member hotels have decided to be vigilant and beef up the security to avoid any untowardly incidence,” adds Mr. Malkani.

Since last year, hotels and restaurants had been permitted to serve alcohol on New Year's Eve until 5AM of the New Year.

“We understand that some revellers would like to celebrate the occasion with wine and spirits. For these guests, we will try and provision for cabs so they do not indulge in driving under influence of alcohol. Wherever possible, we will make note of the taxi number plates just to be additional safe. Within the reach of each hotel and restaurant, we will ensure that the parties will be celebrated in the right spirit. I wish to take this opportunity to wish everyone, a very Happy New Year,” concludes Mr. Malkani. ■



**Bharat Malkani**  
President, HRAWI

## Mr. Ashwin Gandhi, visited the Finance Minister and several other MP's, to discuss the Service Tax matter on behalf of HRAWI.

Mr Ashwin Gandhi of Express Group of Hotels, Baroda and Jamnagar visited Parliament House with Mrs Jayaben Thakkar Ex MP (BJP) on 17th Dec 2014 and personally gave letter on behalf of HRA (WI) with explanation that Dr Manmohan singh (FM) had removed the Expenditure tax of 15% on A/C Restaurants after similar representation was made by Mr Gandhi in 1992-93 budget under para 69, considered A/C no more Luxury in Restaurants. However MR Chidambaram brought 5% service Tax on A/c restaurant even if any part of restaurant (with computer for billing only), entire non a/c area has to pay Service tax.

Also Government added over 90 lacs new assess in the country.

Therefore he was requested to do away with this S Tax which is also in favor of Restaurants in few High courts and now in Supreme court.

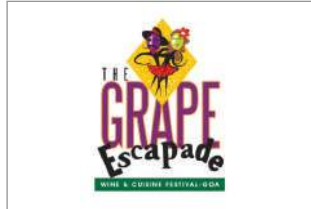
If this is removed in 15-16 Budget we shall consider to withdraw the case for past period. The Finance Minister Mr. Arun Jaitley gave positive response to Mr Gandhi and assured to look into the matter.

“I met few MP's; Paresh Raval, Shatruna Sinha, Muktar Abbas Nakvi, Murli Manohar Joshi, Smriti Irani, Ravi Prasad etc. Also had opportunity to meet PS to Hon Narendra Modi in his office, Mr Rajiv Topno (ex collector Baroda) to whom I gave the copy of representation which he is to forward to FM” said Mr Ashwin Gandhi. ■





## Goan wine festival - Grape Escapade 2015



Goa gears up for the Grape Escapade, one of the largest lifestyle fests, featuring food, wines and everything Goa, to be held at Panjim from January 23-26. Grape Escapade 2015 – The biggest of world renowned wine festivals held in India is set to encapsulate the spirit of Goa and Goan lifestyle from January 23 – January 26, 2015. Organized since 2005, the Grape Escapade 2015 is set to be the best edition this year with wines, haute cuisine and an entertainment extravaganza that will add glamour to the proceedings. The festival is being organized by Goa Tourism at the D. B. Bandodkar Grounds, Campal, and Panjim. Apart from being the only festival of its kind in Goa, the Grape Escapade is also touted to be one of the most popular gourmet festivals till date. The festival will bring together restaurateurs, hoteliers, wineries and lifestyle brands, all under one roof. More than 20 wineries will pour wines, while around 15 restaurants and catering companies will offer a range of gourmet food classics, including barbecues, pasta, oriental cuisine and other delicacies. Vegetarian options, chicken, and meat dishes will also be available, as will a bevy of luscious sweet treats. The festival also adds economic value to Goa every year as it brings together restaurateurs, wineries, and hospitality and lifestyle players and provides business networking opportunities to F&B managers and wine manufacturing units. The Grape Stomping, which is a tradition at the festival, is a source of much delight and fun for the visitors and is an intrinsic part of the festival this year as well. Leading wineries, hoteliers and restaurateurs like Diageo Malaya Wines, Bohemia Wine, 4 Season Wine, Shula wines, Chateau Indigo, Howling Wolves, Big Banyan Wine, Mandalavalley Wine, Zampa Wines, N.D. Wines, Nira Valley Wine, Vinsura Wine, Berkmann Wine Cellars India Pvt. Ltd., Vintage Wine, Mums Kitchen, Vasquitos, Bottle Bay, Zeebop and Khana-sutra have participated in the Grape Escapade in the past and Goa Tourism is expecting an overwhelming response of participants from the trade and industry to the festival this year as well.

“Last year we had 40,000 participants and visitors during the four-day Grape Escapade and it was an enthralling experience for one and all. We are sure that this year too it will be a success,” said Tourism Minister Shri Dilip Parulekar.

Chairman of GTDC, Shri Nilesh Cabral said, “This year the numbers should double in view of the increasing responses received.”

Goa Tourism is expecting an increase in B2B participants between wineries, hoteliers and restaurants as Grape Escapade provides a platform for business and trade partnerships at every edition organized during the last one decade. Exclusive wine tasting sessions will be conducted on all four days for invitees and wine connoisseurs. Attractive discounts are also levied upon purchases by visitors to the festival. This festival gives a platform not only to experts and wine manufacturers but to tourists who through the venue for the cultural fiesta. This year fashion shows, live music, dance performances are set to mesmerize all visitors. Crowning of the Grape Escapade Queen 2015 is also a key highlight of the four day festivities and will be held on January 26, 2015. ■

## Goa Tourism played a key role at the 17th Exposition of the sacred relics of St Francis Xavier at the Old Goa Complex

The 17th Exposition of the sacred relics of St Francis Xavier concluded on January 4, 2015. More than 50 lakhs pilgrims venerated the relics of the Saint during the 43-day SFX Exposition at Old Goa. Months of planning and chalking out of the solemn event ended on a successful note yesterday as the relics were carried back from the St Cathedral to the Basilica of Bom Jesus- the resting place of the Saint.



Since the commencement of the SFX Exposition on November 22, 2014, more than a lakh pilgrims venerated the relics daily, and during the last three- four days, timings for veneration were extended by a few hours to meet the rush and long queues.

Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal Archbishop Sal-



vatore Pennacchio led the concluding Mass assisted by Archbishops Philip Neri Ferrao of Goa, and Stanislaus Fernandes of Gandhinagar and Bishops Lumen Monteiro of Agartala, Anthony Alwyn Fernandes Barreto of Sindhudurg and Oswald Lewis of Jaipur.

Archbishop Ferrao, in his introductory talks at the concluding mass, said "The six-week exposition provided an occasion to experience God's grace to draw inspiration from St Francis Xavier and strengthen faith in God. St Francis is God's gift to us, and we invoke his blessings for our ongoing journey of faith."

Fr Alfred Vaz, convener of the Exposition Committee, shared his joy at the successful completion of the events. He said more than 600 volunteers, mostly student and young people, who went around with enthusiasm, care and joy were the visible face of the organisers. "They made a lot of sacrifice to be at the service of the pilgrims, which contributed toward the success of the exposition," he said.

During the SFX Exposition, masses were held in various Indian and foreign languages. Goa Tourism also played a key role at the SFX Exposition by assisting visitors at the Old Goa Complex, disseminating information and providing tourism related services. Hop On Hop Off vehicles were introduced to give pilgrims and tourists an insight into Old Goa's heritage Sites.

Mr. Dilip Parulekar, tourism minister said, "The Exposition of the sacred relics of St Francis Xavier has brought visitors from all across the globe. We are happy that the spiritual event has been conducted successfully. This will give us a big boost in promoting Goa for pilgrimage tourism and draw tourists from far and wide to the State of Goa." ■

## Konkan Swaad Katta restaurant at Ratnagiri station

Keeping up with its endeavour to provide value-added services to passengers and to implement eco-friendly technologies to conserve environment, Konkan Railway has set up a Konkani-cuisine restaurant "Konkan Swaad Katta"



at its Ratnagiri station which will serve scrumptious Konkani cuisine to the passengers travelling on Konkan Railway route. The 'Konkan Swaad Katta' was inaugurated by Suresh Prabhu, Minister for Railways, Government of India.

Konkan region's famous products like cashew nuts, Kokam, traditional Konkani dishes like Fanas Sanjan, Puran Poli, Shrikhand Puri, Walichi bhaji, Fanasachi bhaji, Kokum Sharbet, Amla Sharbet, Sol Kadhi, Ginger Kokum, Khadkhade Ladu, Dink Laddu and many more Konkani preparations will be made available at the restaurant. ■

## Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation gets recognized as PSE of the Year

Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) gets recognized as number one tourism board amongst India's best performing Public Sector Enterprises.



In the quarterly review of India's Public Sector Enterprises (IPSE 2014) held in New Delhi, MTDC ranks on the top list. Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) won the prestigious award for "Tourism PSE of the Year" and it's the first and the only tourism board to get this appreciation.

MTDC is successfully promoting Tourism Brand "Maharashtra Unlimited" and for the campaign – "MAHA HAI MAHARASHTRA" is also appreciated as the Best Tourism Brand Media Campaign. The award was received by Sunil Kungeri, Manager, Marketing MTDC at the event held in New Delhi.

Commenting on the occasion, Sanjay Dhekane Sr. Manager, Publicity & PR, MTDC said, "This is a result of planned, focused and aggressive marketing since two years. We are proud of being a trend setter in the tourism industry through various innovative promotional campaigns and marketing strategies. The award is an appreciation for our hard work. We are in a constant effort to facilitate tourist in all possible assorted ways so that they explore the beauty of Maharashtra and get enriched by the experience."

Maharashtra ranks number one in attracting foreign tourists. In 2013 Maharashtra received 41, 56,343 foreign tourists and 8, 27, 00,556 domestic tourists which is approximate estimated growth over 2012. Tourist gets enthralled to see the diversity of Maharashtra and hidden gems unexplored. Maharashtra has beautiful hills, pristine beaches, rich wild-

life, glamorous city life of Mumbai, rustic landscape of Vidarbha, cultural heritage of Ajanta-Ellora, maximum number of forts, ancient and modern structures, social revolutionaries' heritage, history and lots more. The proven fact that Maharashtra is widely considered as a safe State for tourists to move around. MTDC's presence in International market has encouraged people to travel in Maharashtra. The initiatives like World Travel Mart, Maharashtra Travel Mart and Times Square New York has helped MTDC reach people across the globe. Various festivals, travel shows like Mahaparyatan and Chal Yatrika, variation in television commercials, and the participation in exhibitions and arranging FAM tours has added in the better visibility. MTDC is aggressive in terms of planning the promotion strategies to create awareness. ■

## MTDC Resorts were majorly booked for the New Year



**T**endency to go for a short vacation out of the cities hustle bustle, visiting to religious places also seemed to be priority for several Mumbaikars so many moved out of the city with family and friends to other destination of Maharashtra for their New-year celebrations, resulting in all Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) resorts almost getting booked for the end of the year season.

Favorable weather condition and perfect time for celebration has increased the number of tourist's arrivals in Maharashtra.

Mr. Sanjay Dhekane, senior manager publicity and PR, MTDC said, "The bookings were full at most of our resorts, since people prefer to plan well in advance, we got a good response at all the resorts."

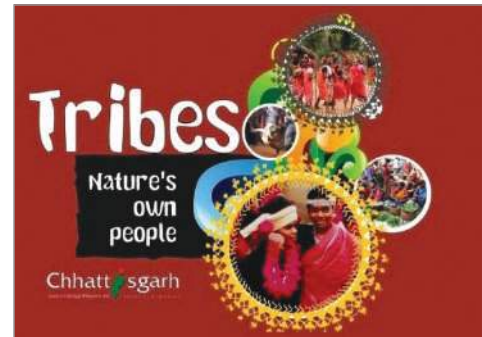
MTDC's Bhandardara, Ganpatipule, Matheran, Mahabaleshwar, Karla, Chikhaldara, Tadoba, Tarkarli, Velneswar resorts were completely booked this festive season.

Other popular destinations include Panshet, Malshej Ghat, Shirdi, etc.

Mr. Dhekane added, "We appeal to locals at tourist destination to support us during this season. We always encourage community tourism as it helps develop rural places near destination and also gives employment. Bed and Breakfast facilities will help, not just help tourist to enjoy their destination, but will also generate revenue for locals." ■

## Chhattisgarh Theme State for Surajkund Mela 2015

**C**hhattisgarh is Theme State, Lebanon Partner nation for the forthcoming Surajkund Mela The acclaimed calendar event of Haryana Tourism, the 29th Surajkund International Crafts Mela, will be celebrated from 1st-15th February 2015 at Surajkund,



Faridabad. The Mela showcases the richness and diversity of the handicrafts, handlooms and the cultural heritage of India. The idea of hosting the Mela is to recreate a pristine rural ambience for foreign and domestic tourists, tell the patrons of arts and crafts of the skills involved in creative arts, to introduce crafts persons directly to the buyers, and to identify, nurture and preserve the languishing crafts of the country. It is jointly hosted by Haryana Tourism Corporation and Surajkund Mela Authority in collaboration with the Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs. This festival has come to occupy a place of pride and prominence, attracting more than a million domestic and foreign visitors during the Mela. Uniqueness of the Mela is that one of the Indian states gets the honour to occupy the position of the Theme State each year. The Theme State was conceptualized broadly with a view to promote and focus the art, craft and cuisine of each state of India every year. Mrs Sumita Misra, Managing Director, Haryana Tourism Corporation, informed that Chhattisgarh has been chosen as the Theme State for the 29th Surajkund International Crafts Mela-2015. The Mela provides a rare opportunity to the Theme State to showcase its handicrafts, handlooms, performing arts, cuisine and its tourist potential to a vast cross-section of people. Chhattisgarh will showcase its tribal heritage and culture, which is still found well-preserved in the forests of Bastar. The

skilled crafts persons, talented artistes and master chefs from the state will participate in the Mela. Also, an ethnic ambience representing the state's rural ethos will be created on the Mela grounds. The Mela has grown in stature and it attained an international status in 2013 and is now attracting more and more foreign participation. Mrs Misra further disclosed that Lebanon will be

the Partner Nation for the 29th Surajkund International Crafts Mela-2015. Also the crafts persons, cultural troupes and master chefs from the Mediterranean nation will present their talent and skills to enthrall the visitors at the forthcoming Mela. About 20 countries have already been confirmed for participation in the Surajkund International Crafts Mela-2015. For the first time in 2009, Egypt became the Focus Nation and the idea of introducing a country/nation as a Partner Nation was mooted. Thailand was introduced as the first Partner Nation during the 26th Surajkund Crafts Mela-2012. Later, African Nations participated as Partner Nations in the 27th Surajkund International Crafts Mela-2013 and Sri Lanka was chosen as Partner Nation for 28th Surajkund International Crafts Mela-2014. The Theme State and Partner Nation indeed lend a special appeal to the Mela complimenting the Indian culture and leads to the confluence of various nations. ■

## TGB GROUP organized a grand lunch for slum children on Christmas day as part of their social activity

In the spirit of Christmas, TGB celebrated and shared the Joy of Giving with the underprivileged kids



of Ahmedabad Brotherhood Charitable Trust. Mr. Manish Somani, son of Mr. Narendra Somani ensured to celebrate his birthday, with the underprivileged kids. By experiencing the joy of giving and the pleasure in feeding the poor children, he was quoted saying – he felt light hearted to see the smiling faces. The activity took place at The Grand Bhagwati Hotel with the presence of Somani family.

In the spirit of Christmas, this time TGB organized a grand lunch for everyone with a Secret Santa who distributed sweets to the children. The children were excited as they got the chance to dance to their favorite music with their Santa. These children are from a slum near Maninagar, Gujarat and they study in municipal

schools. The trust tries to give them the best education and facilities through their funds. Their eyes were gleaming with happiness when Mr. Narendra Somani interacted with them and a group of orphan children sang a special birthday song for Manish Somani, which made him emotional. Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Narendra Somani, CMD, TGB Banquets & Hotels Ltd. said “The best way to serve God is to help the poor and feed the hungry and TGB true to its promise in delivering the best, tried to make impact in the lives of deprived children through this activity. These kids may not get a chance to celebrate the festival in such a grand manner, therefore we thought to invite them as our guests and enjoy with them, sharing their joy and laughter”.

The Grand Bhagwati served elaborate Christmas lunch buffet with a choice of Indian and International favorites and Christmas specials with a lovely decoration to go with it and special offerings like Yule log, Christmas cupcakes, Ginger cookies tart, dry cakes like vanilla, chocolate, plum at TGB Café n Bakery. ■

## ‘VEDGE’ a new vegetarian multicuisine restaurant in Mumbai



Bombay Hospitality's new multi-cuisine restaurant venture 'VEDGE' aims to break the age old 'boring' myth associated with Vegetarian cuisine via its handcrafted all day dining vegetarian eatery. 'VEDGE' aims to fill the gap of a young, trendy vegetarian diner that has the best of all worlds with respect to cuisine and experience, giving them variety in not only taste but also a look and feel not typical to the regular vegetarian restaurant.

Aditya Sawant the owner of VEDGE graduated from BBA with Honors & Merit in 2013 from Les Roches International School of Hotel Management, Switzerland and then came back to India with a vision that he wanted to start something of his own.

“I wanted to achieve something in life. I conducted an

extensive market research, and found a gap and potential for new age vegetarian cuisine, for the new young India. We tend to perceive veg restaurants only to be family oriented, why not break the mold - make it different and unexpected - create a space for single diners, college students, youth and families all having a great time, without the supposed 'clutter' experienced in vegetarian eateries today." This is how it was born. We opened four months ago for the consumers. It won't stop there. We are looking to explore & expand it as a chain of upper casual dining restaurant and scale it up all over the country (Pan-India), in cities that are well known for offering vegetarian cuisine, such as Gujarat, Bangalore, Delhi and other well-known metro cities in India. First, though, we are looking to open 2 to 3 outlets in and around Mumbai. And in the next 5-10 years, well, keeping my fingers crossed, we'll expand rapidly. While expanding, we'll keep in mind traditions/ethnicities. Some people like traditional while others like global/international cuisine. While also keeping in mind the need to stay premium. We wanted 'VEDGE' to be not very cheap, but not too expensive either, as we

are looking to target mid-range and gain volume business by doing so. We want to wow every customer with a delicious dining experience: great ambience, great service, eye appealing food presentation, and overall great taste, all at a great value. We want to deliver quality-dining experiences tailored to delight our guests. Some of our monthly festivals will be Sizzlers, Burgers, Sandwiches and Desserts. We will also be announcing Chef's Special, Combo Meals and Corporate Lunch deals."

"Nevertheless, there is a lot to explore through the monthly food festivals and to present something new from the usual, plus also to present new dimensions with respect to Pan-Asian, Indian, and Continental cuisines. We don't want to give our consumers the same choices, but want to explore more within the menu. Push their palate boundaries." Concluded Mr. Sawant.

As part of its future expansion strategy, BHMP L will launch dine-in and express version of VEDGE across the country within the next 3 years. The company also plans to launch a few more new age 'surprise element' concepts in and around Mumbai within the next 5 years. ■

# Hotel For Sale

**A Two Star Running Hotel In Sadashiv Peth, Pune, 5 Min Drive From Deccan Gymkhana, In The Heart Of Heritage Pune**

- Having Fully Airconditioned 38 Rooms Of Sizes 150-250 Sq Ft, 2 Conference Halls With Terrace Party Facility,
- A Restaurant With Well Designed Kitchen And Centralised Water Heating System.
- All Licences Are Renewed.



Contact:

**982104 4473, 926002 7377**

## Hyatt To Launch Free Wi-Fi Access Across All Properties Worldwide

Hyatt Hotels Corporation, headquartered in Chicago, is a leading global hospitality company with a proud heritage of making guests feel more than welcome. Thousands of members of the Hyatt family strive to make a difference in the lives of the guests they encounter every day by providing authentic hospitality. The Company's subsidiaries develop, own, operate, manage, franchise, license or provide services to hotels, resorts, branded residences and vacation ownership properties, including under the Hyatt, Park Hyatt, Andaz, Grand Hyatt, Hyatt Regency, Hyatt Place, Hyatt House, Hyatt Zilara, Hyatt Ziva, Hyatt Residences and Hyatt Residence Club brand names and have locations on six continents. As of September 30, 2014, the Company's worldwide portfolio consisted of 573 properties in 48 countries.

As part of the company's continued efforts to evolve the guest experience by listening and responding to guest needs, Hyatt Hotels Corporation plans to offer free Wi-Fi at all Hyatt hotels worldwide, providing connectivity and convenience regardless of booking method or loyalty program participation. Free Wi-Fi will become available to Hyatt guests around the world from February 2015. Travelers will be able to access free Wi-Fi on an unlimited number of mobile devices or laptops in Hyatt-branded hotel guest rooms and social spaces.

"Internet connectivity is no longer an amenity. It has become an integral part of travellers' daily lives and a basic expectation," said Kristine Rose, vice president of brands for Hyatt. "Travellers shouldn't have to remember which brands or locations offer it for free or the strings attached to get it."

"Our colleagues are committed to not just listening to what our guests say, but understanding their real needs. This practice has already brought us new ways to make a guest's stay more personal and seamless, from expedited check-in methods to easier ways for guests to make requests," Rose said.

"Today, people consider smartphones just as important as their car and more important than television or coffee. Travellers feel out of sync with their lives when they can't freely connect. Giving free Wi-Fi without a catch will enable us to continue to innovating the guest experience to help people be more productive and stay better connected to colleagues, friends and family." Rose concluded.

Hyatt hotels across many brands have long offered Wi-Fi at



no charge to guests in several of its brands and to elite members of the Hyatt Gold Passport loyalty program. Expanding free Wi-Fi is part of Hyatt's ongoing focus to make the guest experience more seamless.

Where available, Hyatt Gold Passport Diamond and Platinum tier members will receive a complimentary upgrade to premium Wi-Fi service. ■

## JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts, plans to open one more hotel in Mumbai-India

Marriott International is an American diversified hospitality company that manages and franchises a broad portfolio of hotels and



related lodging facilities. The company's luxury hotel brand, JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts, plans to open one more hotel in India by 2015 bring the number of properties to 7 in India. Located 1 km away from the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport Mumbai, the new hotel boasts of 585 rooms. Guests can choose to dine at JW Cafe or at Italian specialty restaurant, Romano's. With more than 56,000 sq.ft. of indoor and outdoor convention space, the property offers 11 well-appointed meeting rooms with state-of-the-art conferencing facilities. The 24 hour fitness centre includes a spa, sauna and pool while holistic Spa by JW offers a host of therapies based on four benefit states – Calm, Renew, Indulge and Invigorate.

The hospitality group also plans to open three properties in Greater China. By 2020, the global brand portfolio is expected to encompass 105 properties worldwide, 45 of which will be located in the Asia-Pacific region.

"The addition of these four amazing hotels only continues to strengthen JW Marriott's already strong presence in Asia" said Simon Cooper, President and Managing Director of Marriott International Asia Pacific.

"We are embarking on an exciting time for the brand and region, and have plans to further expand the brand into new markets including Chengdu, Xian, Guangzhou and Dalian in China, Kolkata in India, Jakarta in Indonesia, and Phuket in Thailand," he added.

"Asia is one of the fastest growing and most important regions for JW Marriott. Since opening the JW Marriott Hong Kong in 1989, we have been committed to building striking hotels that promise beautiful design and a memorable guest experience, delivering our signature intuitive service that speaks to this key area of the world," said Mitzi

Gaskins, vice president & global brand manager for JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts. ■

## The Tourism Corporation of Gujarat to accommodate guests in High-tech Luxury Tents



The Gujarat state is gearing up to host high-profile events like Pravasi Bharat Divas, Vibrant Summit, International Kite Festival and PlastIndia-15 event due to which the luxury hotels in the cities have no rooms available. In fact, all star category hotels are pre-booked almost three months ago. In order to accommodate the guests, therefore, the government has come up with high-tech luxury tents for those who might have failed to book rooms. The Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Limited has set up 300 such tents on the Science City Campus at an estimated cost of Rs 10 crore. Eight-foot tall and 14-foot wide, these tents will have facilities like air-conditioning, heater, hot and cold water facilities, a bathroom and a toilet.

The contract for putting up the tents has been awarded to the Gandhi Corporation limited. Gandhi Corporation Chairman Mr. Hemu Gandhi said, "We are creating 300 Swiss cottages for the tourists. These tents will be fire retardant to make it more secure and durable for the tourists." Gandhi added, "The tent will be made from steel and will have wooden flooring to give it an elegant look." ■

## Italian firm partners with Master Chef Winner to open restaurant chain in India

Macchiato Pizzeria Bar and Grill is launched in the city of Navi-Mumbai by Celebrity Chef Manoj Rai and Master Chef winner Ripudaman Handa, it is first Italian restaurant, which has 3 level with family dining area on the ground to a live bar on the top. The food joint will be serving authentic Italian cuisine right from wood fired pizza, homemade pastas to Italian wines sourced from the best vineyards of Italy.

"Our Idea behind Macchiato is to provide people with authentic Italian cuisine at affordable cost. We have ensured

that our majority ingredients are procured from various parts of Italy so that there is no compromise when it comes to quality and authenticity," says Chef Manoj Rai.

Macchiato will not only be about a superior dining experience but will also be providing foodenthusiast from the city an opportunity to interact and learn culinary skills from the best chefs in the country.

Speaking about Macchiato, Master Chef winner Ripudaman Handa said, "I am excited about Macchiato. Under the expert guidance of Chef Manoj Rai I am expecting this to be a great experience for me as a Chef. We are planning some interesting activities like food workshops by inviting well known chefs from the country; I too will be actively conducting some of them"

"Macchiato" is funded by Venezia Food and Beverages Pvt Ltd a venture of GC&P, Italy and the company has some serious investment plans in the F&B sector in times to come. It plans to set up a chain of Italian restaurants Macchiato and launch wines under the Tere De Vinegia brand, said Alok Tiwari, chief executive of GC&P India. Other investments would include dairy products manufacturing. GC&P's core business in Italy is incubating startups and facilitating regular investment in small and medium enterprises. It has the backing of private equity and other institutional investors who channelize their funds via GC&P in sectors and markets of strategic interest.

GC&P started its operations in India in 2013 and set up Venezia Food & Beverages to focus its investments in the burgeoning F&B space. The wine collection will be launched in the Indian market next month.

"Our Navimumbai project is the first one in India and we have bigger plans for Macchiato in times to come. We are certainly looking at Mumbai and other 35 major cities to expand our footprint. Currently, the world is eyeing India and it is one of the big emerging markets. Looking at how the new government is simplifying policies for investors, we expect the F&B industry in the country to grow by over 20% every year," Tiwari added. ■



## HIFI to bestow Aatithya Ratna Award to Mr. Narendra Somani



TGB Banquets & Hotels Ltd. is pleased to announce that Mr. Narendra Somani, Chairman & Managing Director of TGB Banquets & Hotels Ltd., a leading hospitality chain of Gujarat will be awarded Aatithya Ratna Award by Hotel Investment Forum India (HIFI) at their forthcoming annual Investment meet .

Aatithya Ratna means, “Gem of Hospitality “. The Aatithya Ratna award was established by HIFI to honor an individual who exemplifies the extraordinary spirit of hospitality. The Award is established by the Business Hotels Network (BHN) and HIFI conference co-host, Horwath HTL.

Speaking on this announcement, Mr. Somani says, “I am delighted to receive such a prestigious award. This award is a testament to our commitment to the hospitality industry and our endeavour in providing the world-class comfort and facilities to the guests. We have always believed in the phrase ‘Athithi Devo Bhava’ and this award bestows more responsibility on me to meet and exceed their expectations”.

Strategic plan, disciplined life and foresightedness are Mr Somani’s identity. Mr. Somani is a prominent entrepreneur in India. His contributions to the hospitality industry are widely respected and recognized. He started with a small chaat restaurant in Ahmedabad in 1989. Today, TGB is a multi dimensional hospitality group with presence in various verticals such as five star deluxe hotels, star category hotels, budget hotels, club, banquets, conventions, restaurants, café and bakeries and gourmet catering. Not only this, TGB is also the only organized corporate company listed in BSE and NSE. Mr. Narendra Somani is a gem of a person, whose magnificent career achievements have been recognised with numerous awards, like “The Marketing Man of the Year award -2006 by Ahmedabad Management Association, National award for excellence in Hotel Management organized by the International Association of Education for World Peace (IAEWP), USA, National award for excellence in Hotel Management organized by the International Association of Education for World Peace (IAEWP), USA, Most Promising Small Enterprise of the Year by CNBC TV 18, Power Brands Rising Star by Glamme Awards, Most Admired 5 Star Deluxe Vegetarian Hotel by Golden Star Awards and

many more.

Mr. Narendra Somani has created an empire in field of hospitality industry with his vision, enterprising attitude and eye for innovation. TGB Banquets & Hotels Ltd. has excelled in hospitality services, food quality and customer satisfaction under his leadership. ■

## Mr. Sanjay Umashankar Appointed New General Manager Of Vivanta By Taj - President, Mumbai



Vivanta by Taj - President, Mumbai close to South Mumbai’s main business district. Standing tall in posh Cuffe Parade, with nothing short of the coolest bar and speciality restaurants the city has to offer. Vivanta by Taj - President, Mumbai has recently announced the appointment of Mr. Sanjay Umashankar as their new General Manager. Mr. Sanjay Umashankar has completed his Post Graduate Diploma in Hotel Management from Oberoi School of Hotel Management, New Delhi and holds a B.Sc. in Applied Science from the College of Engineering, Chennai.

Prior to his recent appointment, Mr. Umashankar was the General Manager of Taj Blue Sydney, Australia where he introduced new strategies to improve occupancy and diversified the market mix to improve RevPAR. Of his 25 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Mr. Umashankar has spent the last 11 years with the Taj Group. During this time, he has been the General Manager of Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur and has also served as Resident Manager at Taj Land's End, Mumbai where he successfully handled hotel operations, five F&B outlets and 14 function rooms with 600 staff. His work experience also includes stints at the Taj Palace Hotel, Delhi; Radisson Hotel, Chennai; Radha Park Inn, Chennai and the Oberoi Towers, Mumbai.

Commenting on his new appointment, Mr. Sanjay Umashankar said, "A fresh challenge is always welcome, and I am keen to take on this new assignment at Vivanta by Taj - President, Mumbai. Home to some award-winning, world-class restaurants, Vivanta by Taj - President remains one of the city's most iconic hotels. I look forward to driving



its next wave of transformation and will strive to strengthen its position as a leading brand in the premium segment. The aim is to reinforce Vivanta by Taj's vision of offering an unparalleled stay experience tailor-made to appeal to the senses of the cosmopolitan world traveller." ■

## Vishrut Gupta the new F&B Director at Westin Koregaon Park, Pune



Located in the rapidly developing Koregaon Park area, The Westin Pune Koregaon Park offers convenient access to the airport and numerous commercial developments. Tourist attractions are also located nearby, including Aga Khan's Palace, the Tribal Museum and Pataleshwar Caves.

The Westin Pune Koregaon Park recently announced the appointment of Vishrut Gupta as the F&B director for the hotel. Having nearly 14 years of experience in the hospitality sector and specialization in the Food and Beverage department, Vishrut has made an everlasting impression in the hospitality industry. A bachelor of Hotel Management from the Institute of Hotel Management-IHM PUSA, he also has a variety of qualifications and specialized courses adding to his certifications. Building World Class Brands by Starwood Hotels, Function Catering Workshop by ITC Welcomgroup and also Sales and Marketing Workshop for Young Managers by ITC Welcomgroup. His key operating areas lie in sales, international and regional marketing, finance, purchase, stores, receiving, engineering, housekeeping, kitchens, front office, learning and development. He is also very instrumental in planning and coordination.

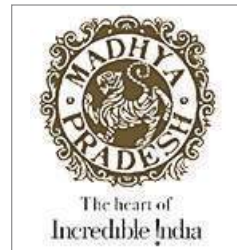
Among all his other accomplishments, Vishrut has won numerous awards for his excellence in the field. A few of the prestigious awards bagged through his management and authority are Times Food guide for Best All Day Dining 2013 "North Mumbai", Bombay High for the best whisky bar by the Whisky magazine, Times food guide best south Indian restaurant for 3 consecutive years and Pan Asian for the best oriental dining restaurant award by Times food guide. Gupta has been associated with the food and beverage sector for over a decade serving in various positions around

the country.

He has worked for Reliance Industries Ltd. as Assistant Vice President and Head for Food and Beverage, he has also served at The Leela Kempinski, ITC Maratha, ITC Grand Central and ITC Mughal. From launching the relaxed luxury inspired Franco Italian cuisine restaurant 'Le Cirque Signature' at The Leela to the 'Alfresco Dining' at Taj Bano restaurant serving World cuisine at ITC Mughal Agra, he has been a strong conceptualiser when it comes to introducing new restaurants and cuisines. ■

## MPSTDC has appointed Ashwani Lohani as Commissioner & Managing Director

Mr. Ashwani Lohani a qualified Chartered Mechanical Engineer, having degree equivalence in four disciplines, namely,



Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Metallurgical Engineering, Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering. He is a Fellow at the Institution of Engineers, India and the Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport. Recently Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. (MPSTDC) has appointed Mr. Ashwani Lohani as Commissioner & Managing Director, replacing Raghendra Kumar Singh. He had earlier served as Managing Director of MPSTDC and it was during his tenure that Madhya Pradesh won the National Tourism Award for 'Best Tourism Performing State in the Country' in 2008. He was also instrumental in launching the successful promotional campaign 'Hindustan Ka Dil Dekho' in 2006. In his last assignment, he was working as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Indian Railway Organisation for Alternate Fuels, prior to this, he worked as the Chief Mechanical Engineer, Northern Railways, after completing his stint as the Divisional Railway Manager, in Delhi. Mr. Lohani is a Guinness World Record holder for successfully running the 'Fairy Queen Express' hauled by the oldest working steam locomotive in the world, he has received many awards and accolades during his career. ■

# Road Ahead

## Hospitality Industry 2015



2015

The Indian hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key industries driving growth of the services sector in India. The fortunes of the hospitality industry have always been linked to the prospects of the tourism industry and tourism is the foremost demand driver of the industry. The Indian hospitality industry has recorded healthy growth fuelled by robust inflow of foreign tourists as well as increased tourist movement within the country and it has become one of the leading players in the global industry. The policies and changes implemented by the Government of India has also been instrumental in providing the necessary boost to the Indian travel, tourism and hospitality industry and is attracting more and more foreign tourists every year.

US\$ 30 billion by 2015. The Industry has been flourishing in recent years due to the improved connectivity to and from the country, better lodging facilities at the tourist destinations has also been a factor which has contributed to increased Foreign Tourist Arrivals. The earlier setbacks in global tourism have strengthened the department of Tourism to promote India's tourism by aggressive marketing strategies through its campaign 'Incredible India'. The 'marketing mantra' for the Department of Tourism is to position India as a global brand to take advantage of the burgeoning global travel and trade and the vast untapped potential of India as a destination.



India currently has over 200,000 hotel rooms spread across hotel categories and guest-houses. The country is witnessing an unprecedented growth in hotel constructions and will be adding almost 114,000 hotel guest rooms to its inventory over the next 5 years which will complement to the acceleration of growth in the industry.

Travel, Tourism and Hospitality is the largest service industry in India. This industry provides heritage, cultural, medical, business, sports tourism etc. It is expected that the tourism sector's contribution to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) will grow at the rate of 7.8 per cent yearly in the period 2013–2023. The industry is likely to experience robust growth on the back of rising disposable incomes and favorable industry statistics. The market is estimated to reach

### Trends to mark in the Industry in 2015

1. Budget Hotels as the next trigger
2. Medical Tourism
3. New avenues of growth
4. Shifting focus to Tier II and Tier III cities
5. Marketing Strategies
6. Emergence of Mixed Land Usage
7. Huge spurt of international brands
8. Innovative operating models

### The current growth

The tourism and hospitality sector is among the top 10 sectors in India to attract the highest foreign direct investment (FDI). In the period April 2000 – August 2014, this sector attracted

around US\$ 7,441 million of FDI, according to the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).

FTAs in India witnessed a growth of 12.9 per cent in the period July 2013 – July 2014. The FTAs during the period January–July 2014 stood at 4.11 million as compared to 3.87 million during the period of 2013, registering a growth of 4.4 per cent. USA contributed the highest number to foreign arrivals in India followed by Bangladesh and the UK.

Foreign exchange earnings (FEE) during January–July 2014 stood at US\$ 11.055 billion as compared to US\$ 10.85 billion during the same period in the year 2013.

### The New Government's initiatives

Promoting tourism and tourism related causes has been a constant for its high potential for job development, several announcements not only in India but also across the globe



regarding simplifying and easing the process for visiting and travelling across India and developing related infrastructure like roads, trains, and airports.

Here are some key policy measures and plans announced by the government in 2014 and what we hope to see as a good result in this New Year.

#### ■ VOA for 43 countries

Foreign nationals from 43 countries may now apply for and get their tourist visa-on-arrival (TVoA) online, entitling them to enter India anytime within 30 days of the approval. This facility will enable the prospective foreign visitor to apply for an Indian visa from his/her home country online without visiting the Indian mission and also pay the visa fee online. Once approved, the applicant will receive an email authorizing him/her to travel to India and he/she can travel with a print-out of this authorization. On arrival, the visitor has to present the authorisation to the immigration authorities who would then stamp the entry into the country.

#### ■ Clean India Campaign

Pictures of piled up trash, dirty roads, and open sewage are an eyesore for all who travel across India. A cleaner India will definitely be a better India to visit. To his credit, unlike any previous leader, the Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi has been the first to give this problem a national stature via the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. He started the campaign calling on commoners and celebs alike to clean India. Now it's a matter of pride for film actors, CEOs and sports people to participate in the program giving it massive mass appeal. Taking the initiative forward, the Ministry of Urban Development is putting together the draft guidelines, there is a City Cleanliness Index in the works and government bodies like the Mumbai BMC and private bodies like the Hotels and Restaurants Associations of India are joining in.



#### ■ Life-long visa card for PIO & OCI

The government initiated Person of Indian Origin (PIO) and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards to be merged. While many NRIs holding the OCI card are able to visit India whenever they wish with a lifelong visa, their children's or second generation Indians or their spouses are unable to visit India as they wish. Apart from generating much needed goodwill, this move could make for significant travel numbers going forward as the Indian diaspora grows globally.

#### ■ Infrastructure connectivity

The infrastructure project, popularly called the Road to Mandalay, or the 3,200-km trilateral highway that envisages a highway from Moreh in Manipur to Mae Sot in Thailand via Mandalay in Myanmar is an important one for travel objective. Once completed, it will enable one to simply take a bus from Imphal to Mandalay and cross over in 14 hours or so. Financial problems and lack of government backing has kept this one slow since it was taken on in 2004. The new government has now put its weight behind it and discussed the same with the Thai counterpart who has promised their support. Another

project, known as the Kaladan project which has plans to connect Kolkata to Sittwe port in Myanmar, and then further to Mizoram by river and road too is on the list. These measures have the potential to open up the North East of India to the rest of the world and bring inbound tourists to India.

#### ■ Speed Trains

The train connectivity in India is the lifeline of tourism. The Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi promised fast trains with speeds upwards of 300 kmph in his election manifesto. The idea is to connect all Indian metros and growth centres by a fast mass transit system. Undoubtedly, this will be a boon to tourism as well. The Mumbai-Ahmedabad project has been inspected by Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) the cost estimate for the project is about Rs 70,000 crore. Lately the plans for a Delhi to Chennai (six hours) and Delhi-Chandigarh-



- India has the potential to become the number one tourist destination in the world with the demand growing at 10.1 per cent per annum, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has predicted.
- The WTO (World Travel Organisation) predicts that India will receive 25 million tourists by year 2015.
- The Tourism industry is also looking forward to the E-visa scheme which is expected to double the tourist inflow to India. Enforcing the electronic travel authorisation (ETA) before the next tourism season, which starts in November, will result in a clear jump of at least 15 per cent, and this is only the start.

The year 2014 looked gloomy when it started, with most players across the sector pinning their hope on the mid-year event – the general elections. As expected, the elections elected a new, pro development – including pro tourism government, and just about



Amritsar have been put on the fast track. This move by the government will increase intercity travel and tourism.

#### ■ International initiatives

Government has signed agreements with neighbours like Nepal and far-flung countries like Australia for bilateral agreements promoting tourism and facilitating cultural exchange. As a result of such agreements, there is now a Delhi-Kathmandu bus service and permission for open cross border traffic with Nepal as well as plans for developing a joint spiritual Buddhist circuit (Lumbini-Bodh Gaya-Sarnath-Kushinagar) besides many adventure and mountaineering projects are been initiated to promote tourism.

#### The Future Outlook

- Despite the global recession, inflation, terrorism and other factors, the overall outlook for the Indian hospitality market is optimistic.
- India remains the second fastest growing economy in the world and the economic growth of the country is at 7.1% of the GDP.

everyone in the sector cheered. Technically of course the previous government had set in motion features such as easing of visa norms, but as just about everyone pointed out, there was little urgency about the process. The new government has made it a reality, in part, true, but more easing of norms is expected soon.

The Travel, Tourism and Hospitality sector is now eager to put the past behind and exponentially grow in the coming year, especially when given the targets. There's a lot of potential, and a lot of directions to focus in on at once for the job to get done. India has aimed for 11 million or 1 per cent of global inbound tourists in 2015. Inbound tourism is crucial, and not just for intangibles such as India's image or awareness generation, but for the money and employment it brings to India. In 2013, Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) stood at Rs 107,671 crore. Final figures for 2014 are awaited, and the expectation is a rise of about 6-7 per cent in the number of tourists. The year 2015 looks bright as the long-term growth perspective for India's travel market remains robust. A cross section of industry leaders and experts from India's Travel, Tourism and Hospitality sector express hope and confidence for the coming months, even as they are realistic about the challenges that lie ahead. ■

# Hotel Centre Point



**HOTEL  
CENTRE POINT**  
Est. 1988

## One of the Smartest hotel in Nagpur

“Hotel Centre Point celebrates the completion of its 25 years in the field of hospitality & takes this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed towards the feat.”

Centre Point Group of Companies, a five decade old Group in the business of Home Care Products, Hospitality and Construction, is the strength behind Hotel Centre Point-Nagpur, a 5star facility hotel strategically located in the heart of Nagpur's commercial and entertainment hub of Nagpur, at 24 Central Bazar Road, Ramdaspath about 5 km from the Airport and 3 km from Nagpur Railway Station with all international amenities. Hotel Centre Point is known as one of the finest hotels in Nagpur, it offer excellence yet still retain a special warm and inviting atmosphere.

Hotel Centre Point, Nagpur, is an oasis for business and

leisure travelers who want the comfort of home. It boasts of smart interiors and an impressive exterior. The hotel has 110 of the finest rooms that are categorized into Executive Rooms, Premium rooms, Club Class rooms, Mini/Renaissance Suites and Deluxe suites. Each room offers its own aura of solitude and impeccable hospitality. All rooms come with free Wi-Fi, air conditioning, flat-screen Television a desk and 24-hour room service. The hotel has the distinction of having the largest banquet & conference facility in central India, an ideal place to organize wedding functions and large scale conventions & conference. From a wedding function to grand events- the hotel now boasts of 14 banquet halls to cater up to 10,000 guests. Other facilities at the hotel include swimming pool, business center with internet, restaurants, pub, coffee shop, saloon and gymnasium.

### RESTAURANTS

#### Meeting Point

Meeting Point-A multi-cuisine fully air conditioned restaurant with its subtle lighting , first class service from professional yet friendly staff , creates just the right ambience in which to enjoy your meals.

#### Freakk De Bistro

The latest addition to the family. The new Bistro serves an eclectic menu. Sip a cappuccino, sample their combos or try the cold stone ice cream, this freaky joint encompasses one in its warmth.

### MEETING & EVENTS

#### Banquets

Hotel Centre Point has the most extensive and largest banquets





and meeting facility in the region. They have 14 banquet halls which is the perfect choice for conferences, weddings and social functions. The hotel offers versatile, high-end meeting and wedding space for up to 10,000 guests, with the best in audio-visual equipment, catering services from on-site expert chefs, broad band internet access, dedicated conference and banquet team including a wedding planners and florist.

## ROOMS

### Deluxe Suite

This large suite boasts the best in comfort and style and is perfect for guests needing extra space or celebrating a special occasion over a bottle of wine and handmade fresh cookies. Spanning 1110 to 1300 sq ft, the two Luxury Suites at the hotel come with a complement of services that are exclusive to this category of accommodation. Some privileges include in-room check-in, 24-hrs butler service, in room fax, four fixture marble bathrooms with separate shower cubicles to name the few.

### Renaissance Suite

The first thing that will probably occur to one in this suite is the sense of space it effortlessly conveys, which is all the more precious for its elegantly appointed interiors in soothing colors that are in sync with hotel's inspiration and design.



### Club Room

The Club rooms express a distinct in design and furnishing, resonant in the inspiration of the hotel, these rooms invite one into a world of unmatched luxury, they have a fully stocked mini bar and the guests are served with a fruit platter and cookies on arrival.

### Premium Room

The Premium rooms offer a gratifying complement of services, conceived to meet the needs of discerning business travelers. The plush interiors encourage one to set aside your cares, and immerse yourself in a world of warmth.

### Executive Room

The executive rooms provide extra perks, ergonomic chairs at work desks and large LCD televisions. Guests also enjoy standard amenities like free wireless Internet access, Electronic Safes, Dual Telephone line facility.

No vacation or business trip in the city of Nagpur is complete until, one experiences the luxuries and ambiance that Hotel Centre Point has to offer a property with elegance and style. ■



# Famous Chinese Restaurant in the City of Oranges Nagpur

**NANKING**  
CHINESE RESTAURANT

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12 pm to 11 pm

**FREE HOME DELIVERY**

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AMPLE PARKING

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www.nankingnagpur.webstars.com

\*Conditions apply

## NANKING Chinese Restaurant-Nagpur

Nanking Chinese Restaurant at Residency Road, was established in 1968 by Mrs. Chang Moi Yen, mother of Mr. Fonging Chang – Retd. Supt - Custom and Central Excise dept. After his mother migrated to Canada, Mr. Fonging took voluntary retirement after 29 years of service and took up the administrative responsibilities of Nanking Restaurant. It is undoubtedly the best Chinese food joint in Nagpur. Those who love Chinese food in Nagpur, Nanking Chinese Restaurant is their choice. The restaurant is managed by three generation and it is the most popular restaurant in Nagpur and in Vidharba region and it's been awarded A grade restaurant by municipal corporation department plus it is the winner of best restaurant awarded by trip advisor for the year 2013-14. Due to the huge popularity of the food served at the restaurant, another branch of Nanking, namely – 'Nanking May Fair Chinese Restaurant was opened in Sadar Bazar, opposite Haldiram's. The ambience and food of both the restaurant's is quite impressive. The place is apt for formal meetings as well as social gatherings. It serves more than 250 authentic Chinese dishes and has a facility of a party hall, banquet, catering and home delivery. ■

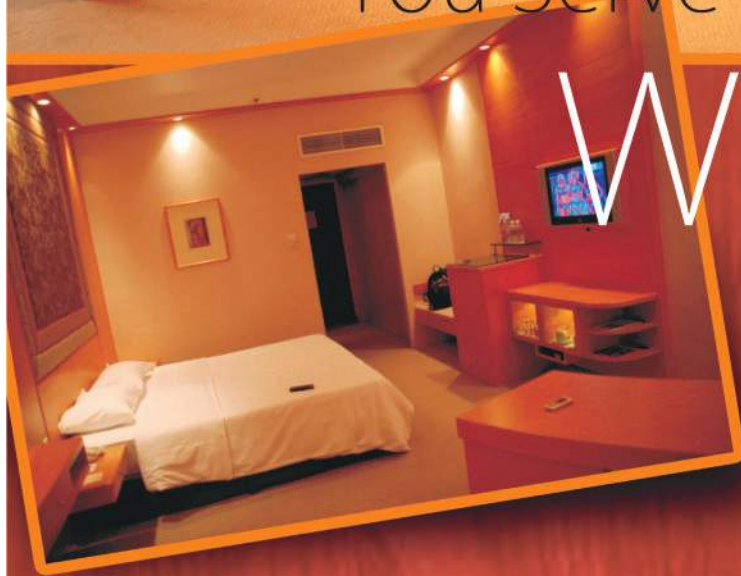






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# Nagpur

## the land of rich cultural, biodiversity, wildlife and oranges

The vast region of Vidarbha stretches across north-eastern Maharashtra, with Nagpur as its main city which lies near the River Nag. Nagpur is a major cultural, commercial and political hub, it is the winter capital of the state of Maharashtra, and the largest city in central India. The city has also been called the Tiger Capital of the World. It serves as a central connection and easy access to a number of Tiger Reserves in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Importantly, Nagpur is well connected to all Indian metros and other cities by air and rail. Nagpur lies precisely at the center of the country with the Zero mile marker (indicating the geographical center of India) located here. The city was founded by the Gonds but later became part of the Maratha Empire under the Bhonsles. The British East India Company took over Nagpur in the 19th century and made it the capital of the Central Provinces. Nagpur has a number of places of interest in its vicinity and is rich in its biodiversity, mineral wealth and ethnicity, this verdant land with its undulating hills and lazy winding rivers, has many wildlife sanctuar-

ies, forts, temples and geological sites. Nagpur is also known for its greenery, and has recently been judged as one of the cleanest and the second greenest city in India. It is also famously known as the "Orange City" as it is a major centre for orange cultivation and trade. The city assumes political importance from being the headquarters for the Hindu nationalist organisation RSS. It is also famous for many educational institutes. This city is culturally alive, and regularly hosts handicrafts exhibitions, tribal dances, and folk-art programmes. Many festivals are celebrated here, including the Kalidas Mahotsav, the Ganesh Utsav and Dhamma Chakra Pravartan Din.

### Sitabuldi Fort

Situated in the heart of the city, the Sitabuldi Fort lies between the twin hills of Sitabuldi and in fact got its name from these hills. The Fort is located on top of a hillock, the area surrounding the hillock, now known as Sitabuldi, is an important commercial hub of Nagpur. Considered to be one of the jewels of Nagpur, the Sitabuldi Fort is well-known attractions

as it is a site of the Battle of Sitabuldi which was fought in 1817. This fort was built by Mudhoji II Bhonsle, also known as Appa Sahib Bhonsle, of the Kingdom of Nagpur, just before he fought against the British in the third Anglo-Maratha War. The fort, which now houses the office of Indian Territorial Army, invites thousands of tourists both locals and foreigners owing to its impressive history. Popular for its magnificent edifice, the Sitabuldi Fort, today, houses a war memorial, which has been built to commemorate the dedication of the soldiers who lost their lives during the popular Anglo-Maratha war. The Indian Army maintains the memorial as well as the graves of all the soldiers as a mark of remembrance and respect for their gallantry. The Sitabuldi Fort also houses a cell where Mahatma Gandhi was imprisoned and which today is one of the major attractions in the fort. The fort is also popular for the picturesque views of the scenic Sitabuldi hills.

### Ambazari Lake and Garden

Ambazari Lake is situated near the western border of Nagpur, it is one of the largest among the 11 lakes in Nagpur, the Nag River of Nagpur originates from this lake. The lake was built in the year 1870 under Bhonsle rule for supplying water to the city. Government officials and eminent people were supplied water from the lake through clay pipes. This lake was surrounded by mango trees, gaining the name Ambazari as Amba means Mango in Marathi. This lake is the most beautiful of all the lakes that





are located in the city. The Ambazari Lake and Garden is one of the popular amidst locals as well as tourists visiting the Orange City- Nagpur. Situated at a distance of six kilometers from Nagpur city, the lake offers boating facilities, rides on mini train, swinging on Columbus boat in addition to that there is a dedicated play field that is equipped with swings, slides and other playground paraphernalia. The garden near the Ambazari Lake is a theme garden and offers a variety of entertainment to children. The highlight of the garden is a musical fountain that changes its momentum according to the rhythm of the music and lighting effects creating a trance-like ambience. The huge model of dinosaur at the entrance of the Ambazari Garden is another attraction of this popular place that attracts both children and adults alike. The garden also has a giant air-filled lion and teddy bear who act as a companion to the children visiting the Ambazari Garden. The weekends add to the fun at Ambazari Lake and Garden as there is an aero-modelling display, wherein remote-controlled toy sea planes land ever so gracefully on the calm waters of Ambazari Lake.

### Balaji Mandir

The Balaji Mandir is one of the most popular attractions of Nagpur. The deity worshiped in this temple is Lord

Balaji. The temple complex is situated on the Seminary Hills, looked after by Motibagh Shri Skanda Samaj that organises assorted cultural and spiritual activities from time to time. According to the head priest at the temple, these activities are basically to encourage peace and harmony amongst devotees and it is another reason for the popularity of Balaji Mandir in Nagpur. Apart from the idol of Lord Balaji who is a presiding deity of the temple, the Balaji Mandir has also enshrined the images



of Lord Kartikeya who according to the Hindu mythology is the commander of the Hindu Gods' army. The temple itself is an architectural delight, which is an excellent blend of North and South Indian architectural styles. While the imposing Rajagopuram that serves as a main entrance to the temple, reminds the visitor of South Indian temples, the well-ventilated halls are reminiscent of the

present day North Indian temples. This distinctive blend of two architectural styles creates a perfect ambience for devotees seeking the spiritual solace.

The impressive Rajagopuram at the main entrance not only adds to the beauty of the temple but according to seers and sages it also augments the spirituality of the devotee who enters through it to reach the God's abode. The temple also houses a library, a community hall and residential quarters for priests. The hall is available to the common public at an affordable fee for religious ceremonies. Incidentally Balaji Mandir is the only Shiva-Vishnu temple in Maharashtra and abhisheks and archanas are performed everyday in precise accordance with Agama Shastras that have been laid down in the ancient scriptures.

### Seminary Hill

The Seminary Hill stands at a distance of about 6 kms to the west of the Nagpur old city. The Seminary Hill at Nagpur has got its name from a seminary, which has earned a lot of repute. The name of this seminary is the Seminary of St. Charles.

The main attraction of the Seminary Hill in Nagpur is the natural view that it offers. The Seminary Hill is actually a hillock. One can go up the Seminary Hill, which is not a difficult task and can also be attempted by people who do not take part in trekking on a regular basis. After reaching the peak of the hill, one gets a spectacular view of the whole commercial city of Nagpur.

### Maharaj Baug and Zoo

The Maharaj Baug and Zoo was established by the rulers belonging to the Bhonsle dynasty. The Maharaj Baug, which was a garden, has been converted into a botanical garden. The zoo located here attracts tourists to this place. Maharaj Baug is a well planned out garden that encloses an impressive Botanical habitat, apart from this, it also features a play area for children, small viewpoints offering stupendous views of the scenic landscape, the garden also has a fern house and a cacti house. The Maharaj Baug also has a nursery along with a cascading waterfall and a bambusetem (bamboo museum) it has a rose garden



featuring almost 600 species including some exotic species of roses which lures visitors from various parts of the world, visitors trip to the herbal garden to know more about herbs

and their healing properties and also to explore the orchards. The adjoining zoo houses different rare species of birds and animals; it is a home to leopards, lion, tiger, peacock and other species. The Maharaj Baug and Zoo offers complete round of entertainment and information on species, be it plants, birds or animals.

### Nagpur Central Museum

Established in 1863, the Nagpur Central Museum is one of the oldest museums in the state. The museum is multi-disciplinary showcasing an extensive



collection of archaeological artifacts, handicrafts and articles of day-to-day use from ancient times. The museum has an anthropological gallery with a dedicated section on birds, reptiles and mammals, which have been stuffed and preserved in their original shapes and sizes. The museum not only depicts the history of Central India but also has a wide collection of flora and fauna from Central India. The Nagpur Central Museum also has an art gallery, which houses some unique paintings from the Bombay School of Art. One can also enjoy informational film shows and lectures, which are conducted occasionally in the museum premises. The museum also has a well-stocked library where you can apprise

yourself with all the history related to the state and the country.

### The Dragon Palace temple

The Dragon Palace Temple is a Buddhist temple situated in Kamptee, district in Nagpur, the temple is about 20kms from Nagpur city, on the Nagpur-Jabalpur road it is one of the finest examples of superb architecture and scenic landscape. This Buddhist shrine has a statue of Buddha in meditation. This temple is considered as a landmark of Indo-Japan friendship

as Madam Noriko Ogawa from Ogawa Society Japan financially contributed in the construction of this beautiful piece of architecture. Inaugurated in the year 1999 by Reverend Nichiki Kato from Tokyo, Japan, the Dragon Palace Temple since then has gained popularity as one of the tourist attractions of the city, not only because of its commendable architecture, but also for what it signifies – peace, friendship and harmony. Known as the 'Lotus Temple of Nagpur', the Dragon Palace Temple is surrounded by verdant green, skillfully landscaped gardens with colourful flowers that spread a pleasant fragrance in the environs. The walls of the temple have been painted in bright white colour that symbolizes peace, clarity and divinity. If one happens to visit

the temple during the meditation hours then one can see thousands of devotees chanting 'Nangu-Mayo-Ho-Renge-Kyo'. The temple is an ideal



place for one looking for some peace. The Dragon Palace Temple is visited by more than 17lakh people annually.

### Deekshabhoomi

Considered as a sacred monument of Buddhism, Deekshabhoomi is a popular tourist attraction in the Orange City of Nagpur, not only for its superb architecture but also for its historical importance as this is the place where Dr BR Ambedkar along with his followers

converted to Buddhism on 14 October 1956. The present Deekshabhoomi is a massive monument that boasts of a stupa, which is an architectural delight. The Stupa, which to some extent is a replica of another well-known heritage site – the Sanchi Stupa, took almost 23 years to complete and is one of the finest pieces of architecture in Nagpur. Although the stupa resembles Sanchi Stupa in



the structure, the major difference between the two is that the Deeksha stupa is hollow from inside; In fact the Deeksha Stupa is the largest hollow stupa amongst all the Buddhist stupas in the world. On the ground floor there is a 211square feet hall and in the centre of this hall is an idol of Lord Buddha. There is a library and a permanent photo exhibition displaying the events from the lives of both Gautama Buddha and Dr Ambedkar. There is a hollow dome above the hall, which is surrounded by a veranda. The four fountains surrounding the stupa from all the four directions that adds to the beauty of the Deeksha Stupa. The stupa has four entrances that open in large arcs, which have been decorated with Ashoka Chakras, statues of lions, horses and elephants giving the stupa an ancient look. The lush green garden that surrounds the stupa is another attraction at Deekshabhoomi. Even today thousands of devotees from all over the world visit the Deeksha stupa on Dussehra and on October 14 to either pay their homage to Dr Ambedkar or to get converted to Buddhism.

### **Pench National Park**

Nearly 65kms away from Nagpur, it is an interesting wild life destination. For

the wild life enthusiasts, this is one of the biggest tourist attractions in Nagpur. Situated on the border of Madhya Pradesh and adjoining Maharashtra, the Pench National Park is as well-known for the abundance of flora and fauna found within the park as the varied species of wildlife. Named after the river that flows nearby, Pench was declared a Wildlife Sanctuary in 1983 and in 1992, Pench was included under the umbrella of "Project Tiger" as the 19th Project Tiger Reserve.

Spread over 758 sq.kms of tropical moist deciduous forest, Pench is one of the most accessible tiger reserves in the country. The forest area of Pench National Park is redolent with tropical



dry deciduous teak and interspersed with bamboo trees and other species of shrubs. The 'Kullu tree' (a species of gum tree) in Pench is a highlight, and visitors are often mesmerized by its almost white bark and spread out branches that are a startling contrast to the lush greenery around. In addition there are many rare varieties of herbs and grasses in this region -many of them of medicinal use. Fauna-wise, a number of endangered species have made it their habitat including the Indian wild dog, the wild pig, nilgai, chital, muntjac, gaur, the four-horned antelope and of course tigers. The tiger population in Pench is one of the highest - 55, in number. The park is also rich in bird life with over 200 species which includes barbets, bulbuls, minivets, orioles,

wagtails, munias, mynas, waterfowls, and blue kingfishers. The Pench River and water streams that weave through the area, along with nallahs and ravines provide the perfect habitat for the water birds of this region along with crocodiles and turtles.

### **Sevagram**

About 85km from Nagpur, Sevagram (Village of Service) was chosen by Mahatma Gandhi as his base during the Indian Independence Movement, in his later years, Mahatma Gandhi made his home here. The Bapu Kutir, Adi Nivas and many other houses in the ashram bear the hallowed memory of Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba Gandhi.

Throughout the freedom struggle, the village played host to several nationalist leaders, who would regularly come to visit the Mahatma at his Sevagram Ashram. The overseers of this peaceful ashram, built on 40 hectares of farmland, have carefully restored the original huts where Gandhiji lived and worked and which now house some of his personal effects. Very basic lodging is available in the Yatri Nivas, across the road from the entry gate, and simple vegetarian meals are served in the ashram's dining hall.

### **Ramtek**

Ramtek is believed to be the place where Rama, the Hindu god, rested while he was in exile. It has got a historic temple



of lord Rama and is also known for its relation with Great poet Kalidas who was famous for his historical drama, Shakuntalam, and for the epic poem, Meghdoot. The Kalidas Festival brings back memories of the golden period of the Vidarbha region. Ramgiri, or Ramtek as it is popularly known today, is the place that inspired Kalidas and its beauty features predominantly in his literary work. Every year, in November, some of the greatest exponents of music, dance and drama perform in the picturesque setting of Ramtek, celebrating its glorious heritage over two exciting days and nights. The present temple is believed to have been built by the King of Nagpur Raghujji Bhonsale, after his victory over fort of Deogarh in Chindwara.

Ramtek is also known for ancient Jain temple with various ancient statues of Jain Tirthankara. It became more popular when one of the top Digambar Jain Acharyas- Acharya Vidyasagar visited and stayed with his sangh in Ramtek in 1993, 94 and 2008 and 2013 for the four months of chaturmas during the rainy season. With his inspiration, a big Jain temple has been constructed. Jain disciples report many miracles attributed to the ancient Jain statue and so the place is more popularly called as Atishayakshetra Ramtek ji by them.



### Tadoba National Park

The Tadoba National Park lies in Chandrapur in the north-eastern part of Maharashtra, and is popularly known as 'The Jewel of Vidharba'. Situated in the heart of a reserved forest, at a distance of 100 km from Nagpur, the park is renowned for a myriad of exotic trees and plants, and fauna that includes

tigers, panthers, and bison, barking deer, sloth bears, hyenas, jackals and wild dogs, amongst others. Taken together, the Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary and Tadoba National Park are known as the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. Deriving its name from a local deity 'Taru', the sanctuary itself is named after the Andhari River that wanders through the forest. Situated at a height of 200 meter at a distance of about 45 km north of Chandrapur town, the park is the oldest National Park of Maharashtra. Covering an area of around 120 sq. km, the park came under the Project Tiger Reserve in 1993 and is presently home to around 50 tigers. Besides the abundance of flora and fauna, the park is also home to several water birds. Visitors to the park experience the thrills of nature via the jungle safari, which is the best option for exploring the park. Also, a 12-seater minibus is facilitated at Tadoba for the visitors' convenience of the safari.

An enticing blend of the old and new, Nagpur is Maharashtra's third largest city and one of the all-time favourite spots in the state. Once the seat of power of the Bhonsale rulers and the capital of the former Central Provinces, this Orange producing city of India is also a major wildlife extravaganza and mythologically associated with Lord Rama and famous Sanskrit poet Kalidasa. Nagpur with its rich history is truly a colorful and totally a cultured city of India. ■



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