

Indian hospitality gains monsoon momentum

There's a particular kind of nostalgia when the monsoon arrives in India. It begins with the scent of wet earth, the raindrops on rooftops, and the slow greening of the landscape. The southwest monsoon sweeps into Kerala by early June and gradually ascends northward. Once considered a slow season for tourism, it is today transforming into a dynamic period of travel and exploration.

According to the latest India Holiday Report by Thomas Cook (India) Limited and SOTC Travel, 85 per cent of respondents now plan to double or even triple their holidays annually. Notably, 47 per cent intend to maximise long weekends and public holidays through short monsoon breaks—making July to September a vital window for the hospitality sector. From value-led offers by major hotel chains to a surge in interest for destinations previously overlooked during the rains, the hospitality landscape is embracing the season in full bloom.

A surge fuelled by deferred demand and emerging preferences

This year's monsoon hospitality surge is underpinned by a unique combination of shifting travel patterns and pent-up demand. "The monsoon season is seeing an unexpected surge in demand this year," notes Rajnish Kumar, Group Co-CEO, ixigo. "Several factors, including unrest in destinations like Kashmir and broader geopolitical concerns, prompted a section of travellers to postpone their summer holiday plans. However, this pent-up demand is now spilling over into the monsoon."

Flight bookings have risen by 25–30 per cent year-on-year (YoY) to destinations such as Port Blair (up 65 per cent), Tirupati (46 per cent), Udaipur (38 per cent), Coimbatore (22 per cent), and Dehradun (6 per cent), according to ixigo insights. On the road, too, monsoon mobility is thriving. "We're seeing a clear uptick in bus bookings to popular monsoon destinations, with places like Bekal witnessing a 100 per cent YoY surge for July 2025 compared to last year," shares Rohit Sharma, COO of AbhiBus. Destinations such as Ooty, Wayanad, and Coimbatore are also witnessing an average 30 per cent rise in bus bookings.

The data reflects a decisive turn in the perception of monsoon holidays. Where rain once meant travel deterrence, it now inspires nature-led escapades.

Embracing the season with curated offers

Recognising this momentum, major hospitality brands are tapping into the seasonal mood with monsoon-specific offerings designed to drive short breaks. Marriott Bonvoy, for instance, has rolled out exclusive rates and benefits across its properties in India under the 'Monsoon Getaways' initiative. These offers are valid through September 30 and include complimentary breakfast, 20 per cent off dining, early check-ins, and late check-outs across popular leisure destinations including Mussoorie, Coorg, Mahabalipuram, and Kochi.

"We are proud to provide our members with thoughtfully curated offerings that inspire spontaneous getaways, while rewarding them with delightful benefits," comments Khushnooma Kapadia, Vice President – Marketing, South Asia, Marriott International.

Similarly, Thomas Cook (India) Limited and SOTC Travel have unveiled their 'Monsoon Holidays 2025' portfolio, showcasing a mix of India and subcontinent destinations tailored for off-season charm. Rajeev Kale, President & Country Head – Holidays, MICE, Visa, Thomas Cook (India) Ltd., said, "India's monsoon is a magical season with lush, cooler climes and full of hidden gems. Being a traditionally low season for travel, Monsoon is the perfect time to embrace the great outdoors and experience travel."

Macroeconomic growth meets micro travel trends

This upward trend in monsoon travel closely mirrors larger economic dynamics shaping Indian tourism. The HVS ANAROCK May 2025 Industry Report notes that India's domestic tourism is not only the primary growth engine of the sector, but also increasingly aspirational. India's GDP is projected to grow from USD 3.6 trillion in FY23 to USD 5.3 trillion in 2027 and USD 7.1 trillion by 2030. With a population where nearly 67 per cent are of working age (15–64 years), and a median age of under 30, the country's demographic dividend is fuelling higher consumption, including in lifestyle and travel segments.

Consumer expenditure is evolving: the share of non-food spending (including travel and entertainment) has grown from 57 to 61 per cent in urban India over

the past decade. Average monthly per capita consumption in cities has surged from INR 855 in 1999 to INR 6,459 in 2023. As per the HVS report, “India’s growing affluence, urbanisation, and digital accessibility are enabling the young population to travel more frequently and flexibly, especially during periods like the monsoon.”

These changes are already reflecting in hospitality performance metrics.

Momentum for Hotels

The latest JLL Hotel Momentum India (HMI) Q2 2024 report affirms that branded hospitality continues to grow across key Indian cities, with 82 new hotel signings accounting for 9,732 keys. Notably, 15 of these signings were conversions—representing a significant trend towards brand consolidation.

Performance-wise, most key markets—barring Goa—witnessed growth in both ADR and RevPAR. Delhi, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad posted strong RevPAR gains, with Hyderabad leading at 11.9 per cent YoY growth. Mumbai remained the RevPAR leader in absolute terms.

New monsoon hotspots and cross-border choices

While monsoon classics like Munnar and Goa continue to be favourites, other destinations are experiencing a breakout year. Bekal in Kerala, Udaipur in Rajasthan, and Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu have seen record demand increases, especially in Tier II and III markets. JLL’s Q2 report also points to multiple new hotel openings across these regions, particularly in the midscale and upper-upscale categories.

On the international front, Vietnam and Thailand have become top contenders for Indian travellers seeking affordable and rain-kissed escapes. Flight bookings to Vietnam are up 25 per cent YoY and Thailand close behind at 24 per cent, according to ixigo.

A rainy season of growth

With domestic tourist visits expected to double from 2.5 billion in 2024 to over 5 billion by 2030, according to HVS ANAROCK projections, and with the robust economic sentiment bolstering leisure spending, India’s monsoon is no longer a pause—it is a peak.

What was once considered a lull in the travel calendar is now being recast as a season of immersive, affordable, and rejuvenating journeys. From nostalgic escapes to smartly-packaged mini-breaks, the rains are no longer just weather—they are an invitation.