

FROM THE CEO'S DESK

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AIRLINE

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Art of Travel



Reliability, Authenticity And Passion

Dear Partners,

We bring to you this edition of Art Of Travel with a new element of design and content.

The design has been inspired by the company's core values; Reliability, Authenticity and Passion. The new content has been introduced in order to bring out the real essence of India today and influences of its past lineage that will help you explore some more.

6 Things we liked about - This section will bring to light interesting trivia about the most preferred hotels that we work with.

A day in the life of - You'll get insight into the life of some of the interesting characters that we have met during our travel.

Spotted by Sita - Our explorers talk about interesting elements they spotted during their travel.

Top chef recommends - Chefs from partner hotels will take you on a culinary journey, sharing their favorite dishes.

Read on to know more...

Come explore with us

Regards,

Dipak Deva

From The CEO's Desk





Inspired By Mughal Architecture...

The Black Buck Lodge, Velavadhar

Ideal for guests passionate about nature, wildlife and birds, The Black Buck Lodge is just under four hours of comfortable driving from Ahmedabad (160 kms). Fourteen spacious stone embellished cottages are spread around two manmade water bodies, surrounding scrub land with a local grass that grows in abundance in the park. Both, the grass lands and the watering hole, on a 70 acre private estate are inviting to over sixty bird species and herds of chital deer, antelope and black bucks. Sit-outs at the back of each cottage overlook miles of scrub and are ideal perches to look out for birds and visiting wild life. Each cottage has a large bay window equipped with a mattress, which makes for comfortable seating.

Radisson Hotel, Agra

With its modern architecture and timeless appeal, the Radisson Hotel Agra is ideally located on 4.5 acres of land, just a kilometre from the mesmerising Taj Mahal and minutes from shopping, entertainment, and top India attractions like Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri. The hotel proudly offers everything that savvy international travellers require. The property has 141 unique, luxurious rooms which are designed with crisp, modern decor and distinguished by specialized amenities to suit the discerning traveller.

Orient Taj, Agra

Built in a style inspired by Mughal architecture, a glorious structural blend of white marble and red sandstone, the resort is spread over 17 acres of land with splendid display of terraced lawns, fountains and ancient interiors that take you back to an era of emperors and princesses. The property has 153 rooms, the size of the rooms ranging from 340 to 4000 square feet of floor space. The recreational activities include a beautiful spa, a health club, live entertainment and a pub. Whether one is looking for peace of mind or an active gateway, the resort promises to cater to everyone's individualistic needs.

Stay At





Airline

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Indigo Kicks Off International Operations With Flights To Singapore

Indian low-cost carrier IndiGo Airlines is expanding beyond domestic services and will offer a daily Delhi-Singapore flight from September 15. Dubai and Bangkok are its other preliminary international destinations. IndiGo will operate a daily flight from Delhi to Dubai from September 1. Daily flights on the Delhi-Bangkok route will begin on September 8. Starting October 2, the airlines will run daily Mumbai-Dubai and Mumbai-Bangkok services. All flights will be operated using Airbus A320 aircraft configured for international operations.

The carrier's next tranche of international routes is expected to include Mumbai-Singapore, Mumbai-Muscat and Delhi-Kathmandu links, while expansion to Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Jeddah is also on the cards.





Guide & Reformed Street Kid of New Delhi

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Have you ever met a person who replied to a compliment with : “Thank you; you are a very nice human being!” Shahadutt does not only speak these words out of gratitude for a compliment but more out of a true believe that all people are good at heart. He believes that if you show someone your respect and appreciation, you will be surprised by what you get in return.

Shahadutt tries hard to live by this principle in everything he does in his daily life; whether it's living together in a small room in a busy, congested part of Delhi with his elder brother and a friend cum co-worker or through his work at Salaam Baalak Trust (SBT), which he lovingly says is his “second mom”. SBT also helped find his parents and reunite him with them.

His day starts with his work as a guide with Salaam Baalak Trust's City walk program, which he has been doing for the past two years. He gives guided tours to groups of people through the area of Paharganj and the New Delhi Railway station, sensitizing them about life of street children while sharing with them his own personal story of survival on the streets.

It's almost lunch time when Shahadutt ends his Walk; he goes through the feedback forms filled by the guests and sees how he can improve the Walk. He discusses, both positive ideas/suggestions and criticism with his Supervisor and fellow guides and makes sure they are followed up. Lunch is usually at a nearby dhaba (local restaurant) where he loves having his favorite thali in the company of his colleagues, over the current news and gossip of the day. After lunch, Shahadutt mostly spends his time at the office computer, confirming bookings for the walk through emails and phone calls, documenting the statistics of the day's walk, updating the Facebook section of Salaam City walk and connecting with friends, he hates to admit but he is a big Facebook addict. Presently he is also learning to make his own blog and website.

Shahadutt also helps the trainee guides in the program to brush up their communication skills and helps them on extended information on the Walk. He loves his work so much, that it's usually late evenings by the time he goes back home, looking forward to having another day of fun and adventure of meeting new people....

A Day in The Life Of Shahadutt



Shahadutt is also an aspiring actor, puppeteer, stage light designer and is studying Bachelor of Arts. He has secured a scholarship to study Business Management for a year at the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), USA. He very recently left for the US on July 15, 2011.



Lifestyle



Hakkasan, Mumbai

Mumbai plays host to the ever so popular Hakkasan in Bandra. It has been designed by Gilles & Boissier, a Paris based design studio which has designed the Hakkasan in Miami, Istanbul and Abu Dhabi. The idea was to ensure that the theme remain somewhat similar, boasting of the same dark and seductive aura as the branches in other cities. Hakkasan is a 120 seat restaurant, with a Ling Ling dining room and a private dining room.

A hefty oak wood door opens to the 6,500 square feet property where a string of hostesses in bright pink cheongsams direct guests to their preferred seating area, leading them through a narrow passage with carved wooden walls that divide the dining area and the lounge. The Ling Ling Lounge is a seductive drinking-plus-dining space, the focal point of which is a 16-metre back-lit blue glass and stainless steel bar identical to the one at the London flagship Hakkasan. The 44 capacity room features slate walls, white Italian marble and wooden grills (they're called "cages") that frame the dining area of the lounge and lend it a sense of privacy. The split-level restaurant rooms, on the other hand, are more suited to family dining.

Tong Chee Hwee, the head chef at Hakkasan London has drafted the Mumbai menu, 30 per cent of which is brand new. The additions were made with the assistance of Kent Lee, who has eight years experience in Hakkasan properties across the world and is now the executive chef of Hakkasan Mumbai; and Wah Cheong Soon, the master dim sum chef brought in from the London Hakkasan and dim sum restaurant Yauatcha. The menu includes Hakkasan's signature dishes such as the baked Chilean sea bass, pi pa duck, roasted silver cod with champagne and Chinese honey and Peking duck with caviar along with their innovations which include vegetarian options such as Edamame dumplings, stir-fried lotus root with asparagus and yam bean, tofu and aubergine clay-pot.

Hakkasan Mumbai is expected to throw in a "special surprise" that will add to the theatricality of the dining experience.





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5th Century Kundala

This 5th Century Gold Earring (Kundala) with intricate circles fitted with precious gems was spotted by Sita at the Colombo National Museum in Sri Lanka. We are baffled by its beautiful design ,the artistic skills and the stylish execution of the master jeweler who created this piece of work some 1500 years ago.

The museum is the largest museum of Sri Lanka and preserves national treasures and artefacts of the country.

Spotted By Sita





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The High Life Pizza

Chef Glenn Eastman of Leela Palace Kempinski, New Delhi recommends The High Life Pizza as a must try during your stay here. This wood oven baked pizza has Canadian lobster, thyme scented mascapone, finished with 28 gms of Iranian Beluga caviar and a frozen blue goose vodka chaser. “The High Life pizza, if you look at it, is luxury on a plate! Crispy pizza crust, creamy marscapone cheese, succulent lobster, finished with Beluga Caviar.... How could any combination be more interesting or arouse more interest,” says Glenn. The High Life Pizza is priced at ₹ 9999.

Top Chef Recommends





From On Board The MV Scotia Prince...

Dear Friends,

On June 24, I boarded the MV Scotia Prince, the newly introduced ferry service between India and Sri Lanka with 200 other passengers. We sailed from Tuticorin in southern Tamil Nadu (3 hrs from the Temple Town of Madurai) on the Indian side to the Sri Lankan capital city of Colombo. The trip was planned to explore what we thought could be an interesting way to reach Sri Lanka; unfortunately it is not ready for our clients.

The MV Scotia Prince was launched at a short notice, I am told. "2 days to be precise," according to an official onboard from the Mumbai based company which operates the MV Scotia Prince. He said that they were still trying to find their feet. And soon a casino, a duty free shop, a full fledged bar (they have a makeshift bar currently which serves for one hour in the evening), a spa and even a DJ to entertain passengers in the evenings would be in place. He also warned me against any high expectations and that this ferry service should be viewed only as a transfer from Point A to Point B, just like the overnight trains within India.

Point noted Sir. I wasn't expecting any VIP or international service standards.

The check-in process in a converted warehouse at the Tuticorin Port on the Indian side was a complete nightmare. There was only one X-ray machine and only one baggage handling staff who could barely communicate in English. The rest of the staff spoke Tamil, the local language. On top of this there were five different lines, waiting for their luggage to be scanned, all heading towards that one X-ray machine. The English speaking baggage handling staff admitted that none of the ground staff had any prior experience of handling a vessel such as the MV Scotia Prince. No wonder that they were at complete loss, thanks to the chaos created by the passengers. Mind you, there were only 200 passengers that day, whereas the MV Scotia Prince has a capacity of handling 1000 passengers.

It is surprising that our competition is promoting this ferry service as an exquisite experience, without having experienced it, I'm guessing!!

Read more - [Click here](#)

Destination Insider





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The LaLiT, New Delhi

The Chef's Table - An intimate and highly personalised dining experience where people, not more than 8 can book a table with Francis Luziner, the Executive Chef in the kitchen. He will personally serve you a 32 Course Meal and also pour out your champagne and wine. No waiters. It's only you, the Chef, some great conversation and some fantastic learning over excellent food. And Yes! In the kitchen where a table will be set up exclusively for you. You will love Chef Luziner's company and his food. And it's your up-close and personal encounter with the kitchen of The LaLiT, New Delhi.

The Wine & Bread Counter - There can be no cookie cutter approach to pairing Wines with Indian food. And that's what it is at the Wine and Bread Counter of the Baluchi Restaurant here. Take your seat, be comfortable. Master Chef KP Singh and his team will serve you the most amazing Indian breads with chutneys and help you pair it with the right kind of wine. The Master Chef's recipe of breads and chutneys are a closely guarded secret. He credits the recipe to his great grandfather, who was a Chef employed by an affluent family, from what is today, Pakistan. There are great stories about how the Chef's great grandfather passed it down the generations and not to mention his own little experiments and tweaks. These are Breads and Chutneys that you will not find elsewhere in Delhi. So it is about Secret Recipes, Great Wine and Great stories all rolled into one at the Wine and Bread Counter in Baluchi.

The Dedicated Wing for Single Lady Travelers - We liked the idea of The LaLiT, New Delhi having a dedicated wing for Single Lady Travelers serviced by only women employees of the hotel. Each room has a camera on the front door and a video screen inside where guests can see who is calling at the door.

Art at The LaLiT, New Delhi - We love the MF Hussain hanging on top of the reception at the Hotel's Lobby. This huge painting by the legendary Hussain is about the Mutiny of 1857, when Indian soldiers rebelled against the British East India Company. And you can't miss the two paintings, also at the lobby, by veteran Indian artist Satish Gujral. The theme is the same as Hussain's. We are also intrigued by the sculpture in the lobby by Gujral titled "Nandi" after the Sacred Bull, the vehicle of Lord Shiva. The hotel's Art Junction is a

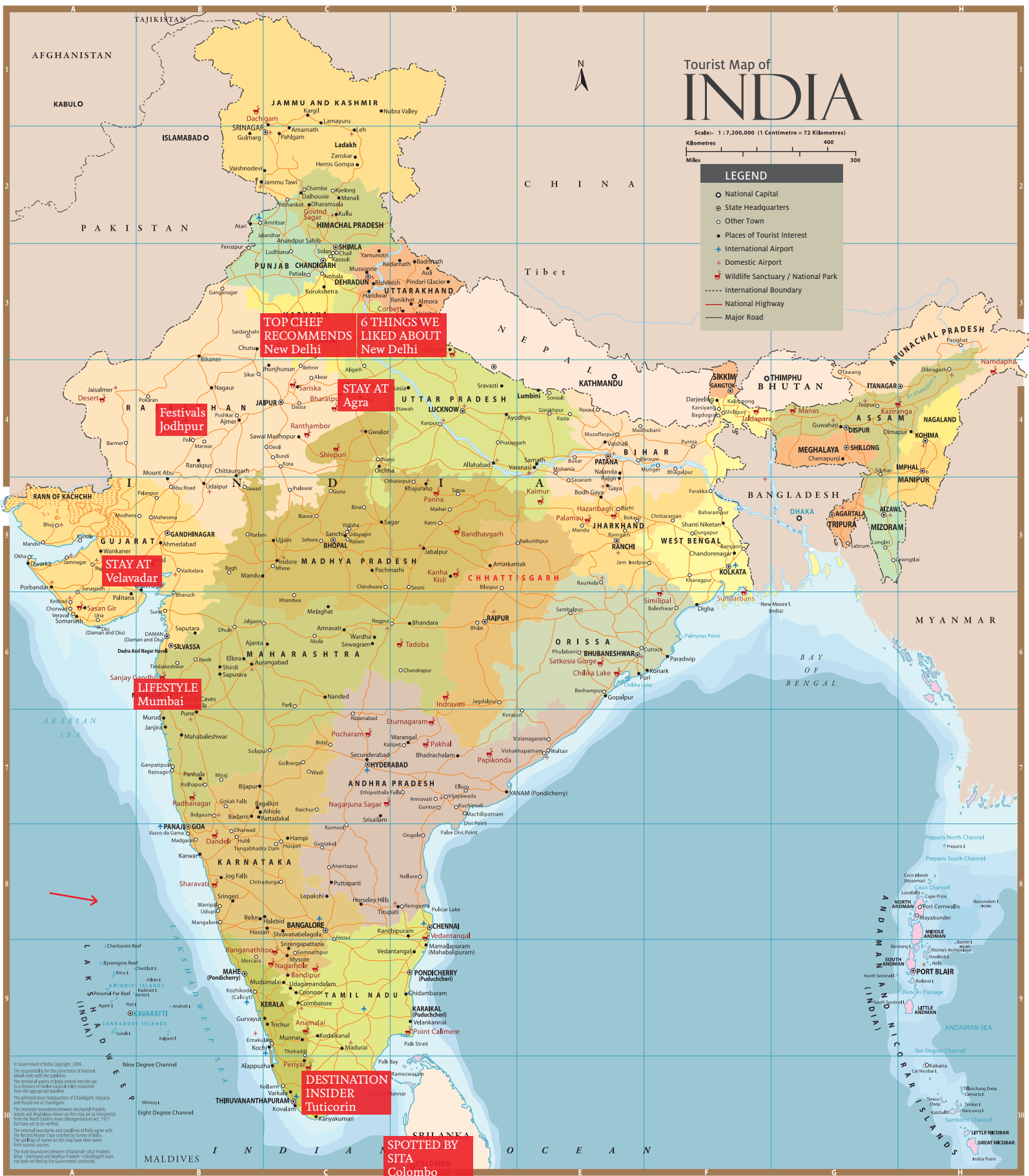
6 Things We Liked About



gallery where upcoming artists are given a platform to showcase their art and interact with Delhi's Art fraternity. They have a permanent exhibition of artwork from the private collection of Mr. Lalit Suri, the founder of The LaLiT Group of Hotels as well.

The Espresso Machine - We thought it was a nice touch by The LaLiT, New Delhi to have the Espresso machine of their Petit Café designed after the first lot of coffee machines in the world. In Copper. Made to order from Italy. Great Cappuccino.

The 24/7 Bar Lounge - Open 24 hrs. Great place to pop in if you are feeling thirsty past closure time elsewhere in Delhi.





Festivals



Rajasthan International Folk Festival, Jodhpur 12th - 16th Oct'11

This annual festival celebrates the regional music and art in existence. It is open to all artists and folk musicians from India and abroad. About 150 artists from Rajasthan and beyond gather for four nights of under the brightest full moon, at the magnificent Mehrangarh Fort. Once the sun goes down over the horizon, divine music fills every part of Mehrangarh, captivating the audience. The festival in 2011 coincides with the brightest full moon of the year in northern India, the Sharad Purnima. There are also interactive sessions during the day for visitors, students and families held with the backdrop of the stunning scenery of the fortress.





Impression



A Mesmerising Stay In India

From: Daniela Haddad
Sent: Wednesday, July 13, 2011 10:16 AM
To: Dangwal, Sunil
Subject: India

Dear Mr Sunil Dangwal!

Namaste!

I'm back home but still on vacation, thinking about the fantastic days I've spent in your beautiful country!

Itinerary, Cities & Monuments

The cities and monuments that we visited are awesome! I wasn't expecting so much... the richness of your temples and palaces is incredible! I told Gagan by the end of our first day: "Every time I thought I had seen the most beautiful monument, I was surprised by the next one!". And it's true! Taj Mahal on the last day is the culminate of an unforgettable trip...

Hotels

All hotels were very, very good. I was upgraded in all of them, but had the chance to visit some standard rooms too (except for Hilton).

Meals & Restaurants

I must say, we all ate very well during this trip! We had a full buffet in all hotels and they always included international food and Indian specialties.

Guide

Well... Gagan was wonderful! What a guide! He explained everything without being boring and was always very patient and polite. He is a great professional, speaks very good Spanish (although we spoke a lot of English too) and he knows many words in Portuguese. Everybody liked him!

Apart from all that, there are some small things that make your service differentiated, such as the cold water and anti septic wipes, constantly offered during the trip, the flower necklace upon arrival, babuchas/slippers, hats, etc. If I were to judge Sita's service, I would say it was faultless... perfect! Great job!

Thank you once again for this outstanding, wonderful opportunity! It was a dream come true!

Best regards,
Daniela

