



Sancharaka Udawa 2025 Concludes as Sri Lanka's Most Successful Tourism Expo

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA



Sancharaka Udawa 2025, Sri Lanka's largest and renowned tourism exhibition, organized by the Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO) in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), concluded on a high note, marking a historic milestone for the nation's tourism industry. Held on May 23 and 24 at the BMICH, the two-day event shattered records and set a new benchmark for industry engagement and opportunity.

For the first time, Sancharaka Udawa was inaugurated by the Head of State, H.E. the President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, highlighting the government's strong commitment to tourism. Key officials, including Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism Minister Vijitha Herath, Ministry Secretary Mrs. Aruni Ranaraja, SLTPB Chairman, Mr. Buddhika Hewawasam, and German Ambassador, Dr. Felix Neumann, were also, in attendance. Hon. Deputy Minister of Tourism, Prof. Ruwan Ranasinghe also attended the event on Day 2, further underscoring the government's support for the industry.

Mr. Nalin Jayasundera, President, SLAITO stated that "Sancharaka Udawa has evolved into a vital platform that unites the tourism community of Sri Lanka.

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Sri Lanka Welcomes Over One Million Tourists in May 2025

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Sri Lanka has welcomed over one million international tourists within the first five months of 2025, marking the fastest the island nation has ever reached this milestone in any given year. According to official figures released by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), a total of 1,006,097 visitors arrived between January 1 and May 25, underscoring a strong and steady revival of the country's tourism sector.



In a recent statement, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism Vijitha Herath hailed the achievement as a major step forward in the country's post-pandemic recovery. "This is the fastest Sri Lanka has hit the one-million mark," Herath noted in a social media update, highlighting the government's broader goal of attracting three million visitors by the end of the year.

The last time Sri Lanka crossed the one-million threshold by May was in 2018, with a similar milestone achieved only by June in 2024. The 2025 performance not only beats these records but also sends a clear signal of renewed global interest in Sri Lanka as a top travel destination.

As of late May, Sri Lanka has already achieved 33.5% of its annual tourism target, with May alone bringing in 109,213 visitors, averaging over 4,300 arrivals per day. While a seasonal dip is typical during April to June due to off-peak travel patterns, arrivals are expected to gain momentum from July onwards, coinciding with the European summer holidays.

India continues to dominate as Sri Lanka's largest source market, accounting for 35.8% of all arrivals in May.

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Global Acclaim for Uga Halloowella in Condé Nast Traveler's 2025 Hot List

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Uga Resorts is proud to announce that Uga Halloowella, its newest luxury retreat in Sri Lanka's central highlands, has been featured in Condé Nast Traveler's 2025 Hot List—a prestigious global roundup of the best new hotels in the world.

Perched in the misty hills of Sri Lanka's tea country, Uga Halloowella offers guests a refined escape that blends colonial charm with contemporary indulgence. Designed by renowned architect Channa Daswatte—protégé of the legendary Geoffrey Bawa—the former planter's bungalow has been thoughtfully restored to preserve its original pinewood walls and satinwood floors. The property now features six expansive suites with four-poster beds, claw-foot tubs, and panoramic views of the Castlereagh Reservoir.

Guests can unwind with spa treatments in the garden gazebo, lounge by the infinity pool, or trek the scenic Pekoe Trail. By night, the property transforms into an intimate haven, with fireside conversations and authentic Sri Lankan cuisine served in a dining room adorned with bold palm murals.

This global recognition is a testament to Uga Resorts' unwavering commitment to creating immersive, sustainable, and design-forward experiences.



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Cont on Pg 2

Sancharaka Udawa 2025 Concludes....

It not only promotes sustainable and inclusive growth but also empowers small and medium enterprises to connect with the mainstream industry and expand their market reach”

He also emphasized the need to fast-track Sri Lanka’s global tourism marketing campaign which would help tourism become the country’s number one export earner.

Sancharaka Udawa 2025 witnessed the largest participation in its history. A record of 180+ exhibiting companies occupied 250+ stalls, drawing over 10,000+ visitors representing a diverse range of sectors including leisure, hospitality, aviation, education, and more.

The exhibitor profile was impressively varied, featuring leading hotel chains, boutique hotels, travel agents, adventure and entertainment providers, traditional performers, transport service providers, provincial tourism boards, MSMEs and educational institutions. Many exhibitors reported strong business leads and immediate bookings, calling this year’s show “the best edition ever” in terms of exposure, networking, and commercial returns. The event was jointly managed by CDC Events & Aitken Spence Exhibition & Conventions.

Cont on Pg 2

Sri Lanka Welcomes Over One Million....

The United Kingdom (7%) and China (6.5%) followed, with notable contributions also coming from Germany, Bangladesh, Australia, France, the United States, Russia, and Canada.

Minister Herath reaffirmed the government’s focus on 2025 as the “Year of Tourism Revival,” with plans underway to enhance infrastructure, upgrade service standards, and

The exhibition not only served as a marketplace but also a vibrant platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration. A series of concurrent events added further value to the gathering, including the Special General Meeting of SLAITO, a Skills Development Workshop aimed at empowering tourism professionals, and the inaugural Sri Lanka MICE Tourism Conclave, which recognized innovative tourism proposals with an awards ceremony celebrating excellence.

Mr. Charith De Alwis, Chairman, Organizing Committee Sancharaka Udawa said “Sancharaka Udawa 2025 was one of the most successful events to date, with the highest number of exhibitors and strong participation from both the trade and public.

Exhibitors exceeded expectations, gaining valuable exposure and leads. We are extremely pleased with the organizers' efforts and the overwhelmingly positive feedback received from both exhibitors and visitors. We're grateful to the President H.E. Anura Kumara Dissanayake for endorsing the event, which signifies his commitment to developing tourism in Sri Lanka. With over 100 stalls already booked for next year's exhibition, we're planning to scale up next year's event and welcome international exhibitors for the first time”

Sancharaka Udawa 2025 concluded on a high note, once again proving to be a cornerstone event for Sri Lanka’s travel and tourism industry. The energy, innovation, and optimism that filled the BMICH during the two-day exhibition which was declared open by the Hon President Anura Kumara Dissanayake. This event is supported by stakeholders from across the country coming together to showcase the depth and diversity of Sri Lanka’s tourism offerings.

Adding to the positive momentum, Sri Lanka recorded over 1 million tourist arrivals by the end of May—a significant milestone that reaffirms the country is firmly on track to achieving its forecasted targets for 2025. This achievement is not just a number—it reflects the growing global confidence in Sri Lanka as a safe, vibrant, and diverse destination.

In another moment of pride, we extend our warmest congratulations to Uga Resorts for being recognized on Condé Nast Traveler’s Hot List for 2025. This prestigious accolade not only elevates Uga’s brand on the international stage but also brings greater visibility to Sri Lanka’s luxury travel segment.

Looking ahead, the industry is abuzz with anticipation as Sri Lanka Tourism gears up to launch its new digital campaign this June. With fresh creative, targeted messaging, and a dynamic online presence, the campaign promises to position Sri Lanka compellingly across key source markets. It is expected to further accelerate the country’s tourism revival and support both local businesses and the national economy.

Around 300 million tourists travelled internationally in Q1 2025, about 14 million more than in the period of 2024. Despite growing geopolitical and trade tensions, the start of 2025 saw robust and sustained travel demand, though results were mixed among regions and subregions.

The year so far has been filled with milestones, and if the current momentum continues, Sri Lanka’s tourism story for 2025 is shaping up to be one of its best yet.



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"Momentum in Motion: ONYX Hospitality Group at ITB China 2025"

A glimpse into ONYX Hospitality Group’s dynamic showcase at ITB China 2025 — where strategy met synergy. From tailored MICE offerings to agile market insights, our team worked tirelessly to spotlight our world-class portfolio and bold plans for the future, reinforcing China’s role as a key driver in ONYX’s success story.





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VIVA Cruises Appoints United Ventures as Preferred Sales Agent in Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

VIVA Cruises, a premier European river cruise operator, has appointed United Ventures as its preferred sales agent in Sri Lanka. This partnership brings VIVA's world-class cruise experiences to the Sri Lankan market for the first time, opening the door to curated European adventures with comfort, culture, and all-inclusive convenience.

Introducing VIVA Cruises

Headquartered in Düsseldorf, Germany, VIVA Cruises is part of the Scylla AG group and offers a fresh, relaxed take on river cruising. With a modern fleet and the signature “VIVA All-Inclusive” concept, guests enjoy full-board gourmet meals, unlimited beverages, on-board entertainment, wellness facilities, and enriching excursions—providing a truly carefree European travel experience.

VIVA Cruises sails across the most iconic rivers of Europe—the Rhine, Danube, Seine, Elbe, and more—connecting guests with charming cities, fairytale towns, and hidden gems along the way.

Target Markets

VIVA Cruises serves a wide spectrum of travellers including:

Affluent leisure seekers and repeat European travellers.

Couples and families seeking safe, curated holidays.

Group travellers and incentive clients, especially those looking for unique, experiential travel.

Younger professionals attracted to themed cruises and modern, boutique-style journeys.

Sri Lanka's maturing travel market is ideal for VIVA Cruises, with increasing demand for personalized, premium European getaways.

A Magical First-Time Experience: Christ-



mas River Cruises

There is perhaps no better way to experience Europe for the first time than during the festive Christmas season aboard a VIVA river cruise. Picture this: cruising along the Rhine or Danube as snow-dusted towns light up with holiday magic. Guests can stroll through traditional Christmas markets in Cologne, Vienna, or Strasbourg—sipping mulled wine, sampling gingerbread, and shopping handcrafted gifts. The ships are elegantly decorated, festive treats are served onboard, and the spirit of the season is celebrated with carols, cozy ambiance, and special events.

For many Sri Lankan travellers, this offers a once-in-a-lifetime winter wonderland experience, making it the perfect choice for a first-time European river cruise. VIVA's winter itineraries are a blend of cultural immersion, relaxation, and festive cheer—creating unforgettable memories for families, couples, and solo adventurers alike.

B2B and B2C Engagement through United Ventures

As the preferred sales agent in Sri Lanka, United Ventures will promote VIVA Cruises across both B2B and B2C channels:

B2B Focus: Collaborating with travel agencies, tour operators, and MICE organizers to deliver packaged offerings, training sessions, and exclusive incentives.

B2C Focus: Engaging directly with consumers through digital marketing, travel events, and personalized consultation. United Ventures will guide travellers through itinerary selection, seasonal recommendations, and value-packed bookings.

With its deep industry knowledge and market reach, United Ventures is well positioned to bring the magic of European river cruising to Sri Lankan travellers—especially during the most enchanting season of all.

Thema Collection Sets a New Standard with Sri Lanka's First Carbon-Neutral Stall at Sancharaka Udawa 2025

TTA BULLETIN

A proud annual participant of Sancharaka Udawa, Thema Collection made history this year by unveiling Sri Lanka's first-ever carbon-neutral exhibition stall—a bold step that reflects the company's unwavering commitment to sustainability and community empowerment.



Driven by a vision to showcase not just its unique travel experiences but also its values, Thema Collection meticulously offset all carbon emissions related to the stall's design, construction, and operation. This groundbreaking initiative was certified by Control Union Sri Lanka, a recognized body specializing in sustainability certifications aligned with global benchmarks such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Green Globe, Green Key, and Green Choice.

The stall's core theme centered on empowering local communities through tourism, with immersive displays highlighting sustainable grassroots initiatives supported by Thema Collection—from traditional cinnamon cultivation and artisanal pottery-making to heritage preservation. The space served not only as a promotional platform but also as a storytelling hub, emphasizing how tourism can uplift communities, protect cultural traditions, and safeguard the environment.



At the official certification ceremony, Mr. Maxime Wickramasinghe, Director – Marketing and Business Development of Thema Collection, remarked “Thema Collection has always been a strong advocate for responsible tourism in Sri Lanka. This achievement is another meaningful step forward, and we are eager to collaborate with like-minded individuals and organizations to drive this movement ahead.”

Mr. Ashan Karunananda, General Manager – Sustainability, added “Across our properties, we have implemented systems to quantify and verify our carbon emissions through third-party audits. This initiative at Sancharaka Udawa is an extension of that commitment, demonstrating how sustainability can be integrated into every aspect of tourism.”

This year's event was particularly significant as it marked the first-ever presidential visit to Sancharaka Udawa. His Excellency, the President of Sri Lanka, Hon. Anura Kumara Dissanayake, graced the opening ceremony and visited the Thema Collection stall. During his visit, he witnessed firsthand the innovative initiatives that exemplify tourism's transformative power—not only as a driver of sustainable travel but also as a catalyst for reviving local industries and promoting Sri Lankan heritage on the global stage.

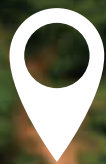
With this milestone achievement, Thema Collection continues to lead by example, inspiring the tourism industry and travellers alike to embrace sustainability, authenticity, and community empowerment as the foundation of responsible tourism.

About Thema Collection Thema Collection is a Sri Lankan-owned hotel chain comprising 14 distinctive properties spread across the island. Each property is thoughtfully designed to reflect its surrounding landscapes, cultural heritage, and ecosystems, offering guests an immersive and locally inspired experience.



With sustainability at its core, Thema Collection has pioneered eco-conscious practices ranging from sustainable construction and biodiversity conservation to waste reduction and community-based tourism. Every property embodies a model of harmony between tourism, nature, and the communities it touches—proving that tourism can truly be a force for good.





PEKOE TRAIL
Stage 21
Kandapola

Step Into a Storybook: The Pekoe Trail's Final Stages Unfold at Heritance Tea Factory

For those seeking to turn their Pekoe Trail journey into a timeless memory,
Heritance Tea Factory stands ready to welcome adventurers, tea lovers, and storytellers alike



Over 4,200 Americans visited the ‘Sri Lanka Embassy Open house’ in Washington D.C. joining Passport DC 2025

TTA BULLETIN

The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington D.C. opened its doors for American visitors as part of Passport DC’s ‘Around the World Embassy Tour’ from 09.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on Saturday, 03rd May, 2025. Under the advice and guidance of Ambassador Mahinda Samarasinghe, the Embassy made elaborate arrangements to promote Sri Lanka as an exciting tourist destination. Over 4,200 US nationals, as officially verified by the organizers of the Passport DC, visited the Embassy during the event.

As a unique feature of the event, a photographic exhibition of over 80 colorful photographs titled “Beauty of Sri Lanka” depicting the ancient cultural heritage, natural beauty with a special emphasis on wild life and the people of Sri Lanka, was presented by the "America - Sri Lanka Photographic Art Society Los Angeles" led by Suriya Perera, Andy Samarasena, Lakshitha Karunarathna, Sameera Kotelawala and Riznad Hussain, captured the attention of all attendees.

The visitors were treated to traditional Sri Lankan hospitality and were able to sample authentic Sri Lankan cuisine having witnessed live cooking demonstrations of preparing of Kottu Roti and Hoppers, and Rice & Curry. The Embassy also offered all the visitors a freshly brewed cup of hot or iced Ceylon tea sponsored by “Basilur (Sri Lanka)” and “QTrade Teas & Herbs (California, USA)”. Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau provided valuable funding assistance for organizational activities.

Traditional Sri Lankan dances depicting up-country, low-country and northern dancing styles and drums showcased the vibrant diversity of Sri Lanka’s rich cultural heritage. The performances were provided at regular intervals by students from four local academies led by Chathuri Wickramarachchi, Lanka Mudannayake, Indika Attanayake and Achila Perera, and was a key attraction that captivated guests throughout the day.

The Embassy made special arrangements for the “Serendib” band, led by Kutila Dias, to perform Sri Lankan songs throughout the day, supported by local Sri Lankan singers. The performances captivated the crowd, offering a rich experience that highlighted Sri Lanka’s musical heritage.

Another highlight organized by the Embassy to mark the occasion, was a photo



opportunity while clad in traditional Sri Lankan attire. Many Americans queued up to drape themselves in Kandyan sarees, while the men tried on vivid batik sarongs and shirts. Sri Lankan traditional handicrafts comprised of wooden masks, drums, bags, batik wear, brass items, paintings, Ceylon spices and tea were on display in three separate stalls set up at the Embassy garden, sponsored by Sri Lankan-American vendors that proved another major attraction for the visitors. A Sri Lankan-American-owned company offered tourism packages that captured the interest of attendees eager to explore Sri Lanka’s rich cultural heritage and scenic landscapes.

The Embassy delighted visitors by presenting them with complimentary packs of Ceylon tea, generously sponsored by Basilur Tea (Sri Lanka). This gesture contributed towards the promotion of the rich heritage of Ceylon tea among attendees.

On a request made by the Embassy, voluntary support was extended by the members of six Sri Lankan community based Associations in Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia. The Sri Lanka Association of Washington DC, Sri Lanka Ranga Kala Kavaya, Kala Lanka Foundation, Ape Kattiya/American Sri Lankan Friendship Foundation, Bethesda Api, Organization of Sri Lankan Americans for Sri Lanka and Friends of Sri Lanka of Greater Washington Area helped in the smooth running of this day-long event that attracted a large number of visitors throughout the day.

The open house launched under a special event, “Passport DC”, was organized by Events DC in partnership with over 60 foreign Missions based in Washington D.C. including the Embassy of Sri Lanka. It is a month-long festival in May that pays tribute to Washington D.C.’s thriving international diplomatic community and its lively and varied culture. As part of the festival, the first Saturday in May, the ‘International Cultural Awareness Month’ in Washington D.C., is devoted to Embassy open houses.

Organized annually, Passport DC showcases Washington D.C.’s embassies and cultural organizations with a wide range of performances, discussions, and exhibits. It has become very popular among Americans in the Greater Washington area (Washington D.C., State of Maryland and Northern Virginia, and surrounding metropolitan area), as it gives them a rare opportunity to enjoy many aspects of foreign cultures and traditions in a single day.



TCEB Unveils “3M” for Business Events at IMEX Frankfurt 2025

TTA BULLETIN

Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) makes a presence at IMEX Frankfurt 2025 with a debut of an initiative “Meet in Thailand: Your Success, Your Moment”, offering 3M elements to generate higher value for events.

The debut is made during TCEB press conference on May 20, led by Mr. Puripan Bunnag, TCEB Senior Vice President.

Mr. Puripan stated: “TCEB is always dedicated to making offerings that meet shifting demands of business world, so that holding events in Thailand can deliver higher value, better return on investment and greater return on experiences. After working in partnership with our stakeholders to overcome economic challenges, we have finally crafted “Meet in Thailand, Your Success, Your Moment” entailing 3M elements - MaxiMICE, Meaningful, Memorable – to offer upgraded resources and new ingredients in Thailand that will give a definition of events in a new light”.

MaxiMICE – This idea is to invite clients to explore and maximise new development of products and services or enhanced and upgraded offerings in Thailand. They range from enhanced accessibility due to increased flights, more capable and potential city destinations, new investment in properties, growth of unconventional venues, larger pool of qualified MICE manpower and standard-certified enterprises, richer options of localised experiences to stronger government support.

Meaningful – This idea is partly derived from TCEB’s policy to advance the performance of MICE industry under the framework of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG). It offers clients possibilities of making more purposeful events with measurable impacts. Spotlighting on sustainability, Thailand has developed low carbon MICE routes, MICE suppliers certified with sustainable

event management, professional bodies in designing, auditing and verifying sustainable performance of events. Furthermore, there are choices of activities designed to involve and benefit local communities in every MICE City and other potential destinations across the country.

Memorable - With strong hospitality, adaptability and wealthy cultural assets, Thailand is always in fit state to deliver return on experiences. Thanks to extensive network of stakeholders in the creative sector, event designers, local communities keen in the MICE industry and tech entrepreneurs, Thailand can help clients craft the events with unique cultural immersion and fusion, finely blended business and leisure, tech-driven execution, contribution to local communities, plus a sense of human touch that will make enduring memory.

Apart from 3M initiative, TCEB also presented major updates on Thailand’s MICE landscape comprising: 15 events from associations and corporations in Europe and the UK landing in Thailand, all 8 major convention and exhibition centers in Bangkok and its suburb being connected directly with BTS Sky Train and MRT Underground Train in May this year, Air France starting direct flights between Paris and Phuket in November 2025 and TCEB support schemes for business events and festivals.

Mr. Puripan added that next year in 2026 will be MICE Celebration Year to resonate with Thailand being selected to host a series of important events. Some key ones are International Horticultural Exposition 2026 (Udon Thani Expo), World Congress on Pain, Annual Meeting of the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund, Global Sustainable Tourism Conference, UFI Asia Pacific Congress. Such large-scale events are a strong indicator of international confidence in Thailand’s readiness and potential to make events a success.

Hahnair launches Distriply by Hahnair, the new brand for innovative NDC distribution solutions

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A HIDDEN COASTAL GEM

Set along Sri Lanka's sweeping southern shores, Occidental Eden Beruwala is more than just a beachfront resort, it's a personal invitation to sink into an oasis of serenity. Wake up to the rhythmic waves crashing on the shore, relax in sun-dappled suites designed for indulgent comfort and quietude, surrender to soul-soothing spa rituals, bask by the palm-fringed pool, savour an array of flavours prepared with island flair...where every moment crafted to delight.

Occidental Eden Beruwala: a coastal haven...effortless, elegant, and undeniably unforgettable.

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MOVEMENTS

Galle Face Hotel Welcomes Suresh Abbas as New General Manager

TTA BULLETIN

Galle Face Hotel is thrilled to announce the appointment of Suresh Abbas as its new General Manager. With over 35 years of global leadership experience in luxury hospitality, Suresh is set to take the helm and lead the hotel into a new era of exceptional service and guest experiences.



Suresh Abbas

Nuwara Eliya, where his innovative leadership played a pivotal role in driving significant growth and operational success.

Suresh is eager to engage with both the team and guests, focusing on elevating the hotel's offerings. His strategic approach will aim to explore new avenues for growth and develop future leaders within the organization.

As Galle Face Hotel looks to the future, under Suresh's guidance, the hotel is poised to continue delivering memorable experiences that reflect its storied heritage and commitment to excellence.

Suresh brings an impressive portfolio, having worked across 9 countries and 3 continents. His diverse expertise encompasses strategic repositioning, operational excellence, and a deep commitment to enhancing guest satisfaction. Prior to joining Galle Face Hotel, Suresh served as the General Manager of The Grand Hotel

Chris Chapman appointed Event Directo WTM London

TTA BULLETIN

RX's World Travel Market London announced that Chris Carter-Chapman has been named as the new Event Director of WTM London, the world's most influential travel and tourism event. The annual WTM London event returns to Excel London on 4-6 November, 2025.



Chris Carter-Chapman

his achievements show that he has the commercial and management skills to lead the WTM London team as the tourism and travel sector goes from strength to strength.

"I look forward to working with him and the team to build on the growth and success we saw in 2024 – and deliver an outstanding WTM London 2025."

Chris added: "I am delighted to be joining RX as the new Event Director for WTM London at what is an exciting point in its evolution. As the world's most influential travel event, WTM plays a vital role in the lives of travel industry professionals across the globe.

"I am acutely aware of the immense responsibility that comes with leading an event of WTM's stature and the significant potential it holds for continued growth.

At RX, we place a strong emphasis on delivering value to our customers. We are constantly listening to our event partners and attendees to ensure that every aspect of WTM London 2025 is tailored to meet their needs and objectives. Our venue – and the opportunities it offers – is a key part of this.

"Excel London's latest phase of expansion will make it the largest integrated event space in Europe, enabling us to host WTM on a scale not seen before.

"WTM London is an opportunity to celebrate global travel as a force for good and to exchange ideas on the next steps in our collective journey towards sustainable, experience-led tourism – a journey that is more important than ever in today's complex and evolving international landscape. I am deeply privileged to be able to play a role in making this vision a reality."

Chris joins WTM London after almost five years at event specialist Intelligence Squared and, before that, as Event Director at Centaur Media. At Centaur, Carter-Chapman oversaw the marketing portfolio which included responsibility for two large-scale events – the Festival of Marketing and Marketing Week Live – as well as several one-day events.

He has been appointed to the role previously held by Juliette Losardo, following her transition to RX Arabia. In this capacity, Chris will report directly to Jonathan Heastie, Travel Portfolio Director at RX UK.

Chris' appointment also comes as Excel London celebrates its 25th anniversary – and becomes the largest fully integrated venue in Europe as it completes an additional 25,000sqm expansion.

Heastie said: "I am excited to announce Chris' appointment as we work towards WTM London 2025 – which marks 45 years since our first WTM in 1980. He has a very successful track record in running B2B trade shows and conferences – and

The Kingsbury, Colombo Welcomes Nandana Wirasinha as General Manager

TTA BULLETIN

Seasoned industry professional brings global expertise and dynamic leadership to Hayley's Leisure city hotel



Nandana Wirasinha

The Kingsbury, Colombo has announced the appointment of Mr. Nandana Wirasinha as its new General Manager, marking a strategic move aimed at further strengthening the hotel's position in Sri Lanka's competitive hospitality landscape.

A veteran of the industry with nearly three decades of international experience, Wirasinha brings a wealth of knowledge in hotel operations, revenue management, guest experience, and culinary excellence. His career spans key leadership roles with globally renowned brands, most notably with Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

During his tenure in the UAE, Wirasinha played a pivotal role in elevating several dining outlets to achieve Triple Black Hat status in the prestigious What's On Abu Dhabi Black Hat Guide—a benchmark for excellence in the region's fine dining

scene.

An alumnus of the Emirates Academy and Cornell University, Wirasinha is currently pursuing a Master's in Business Management at the Postgraduate Institute of Management in Sri Lanka, further reinforcing his commitment to continuous professional development.

His appointment is expected to usher in a new chapter for The Kingsbury, as the hotel continues to enhance its luxury offering for both local and international guests. With a leadership style grounded in innovation, service excellence, and guest satisfaction, Wirasinha's vision aligns closely with The Kingsbury's pursuit of delivering world-class hospitality.

This leadership change signals a renewed focus on operational excellence and guest-centric strategies as The Kingsbury looks to elevate its brand presence in the region.

Sabre appoints Jennifer Catto as Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer

TTA BULLETIN

Sabre Corporation (NASDAQ: SABR), a leading global travel technology company, today announced the appointment of Jennifer Catto as Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer. As part of Sabre's Executive Leadership Team, Jennifer will shape the company's global marketing strategy and brand, helping to drive growth, deepen customer engagement, and position Sabre for the future.

Jennifer joined Sabre in February 2025, bringing more than 25 years of experience helping companies navigate and accelerate through moments of transformation. A strategist at heart and a disruptor by nature, she has built and repositioned brands at the intersection of technology and customer needs, leading integrated marketing and growth strategies at Travelport, Telaria, Travelocity, Condé Nast and SAY. Throughout her career, Jennifer has championed the use of data-driven insights, bold storytelling and cross-functional collaboration to create new market opportunities and drive lasting relevance for brands in fast-changing industries.

"A brand is a promise you make to the market that the business has to keep. I'm thrilled to take the helm of a great brand for a business that has doubled down on its commitment to innovation and product delivery—keeping its customers at the heart of every solution it pioneers", said Jennifer Catto, "Sabre has done what many companies only talk about—modernized its foundation. Today, it's a unified, intelligent travel marketplace that prioritizes perfor-

mance over promises. I'm here to shape a brand that reflects that transformation with precision—one that signals confidence to the market and elevates Sabre's presence across every channel and customer experience".



Jennifer Catto

A recognized industry leader, Jennifer is a Cannes Lions Award nominee, an AdAge Brand Leader Award winner, and a GBTA WINiT Top 50 honoree. She is also a frequent speaker and commentator for major media outlets and is passionate about redefining how companies engage audiences and build enduring value through innovation.

"Jennifer's appointment reflects our commitment to bold, strategic leadership as we accelerate Sabre's journey to become the premier technology platform in travel," said Kurt Ekert, President and CEO of Sabre. "She blends creativity, operational focus, and a deep understanding of digital transformation in a way that is rare to find. With Jennifer's leadership, we will enhance Sabre's brand, deepen engagement with our customers and partners, and amplify our differentiated value in the marketplace."

With Jennifer's appointment, Sabre continues to strengthen its leadership team and sharpen its focus on delivering innovative technology solutions that power the future of travel.

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Tourism spending in the Middle East is projected to reach US\$350 billion by 2030, according to a new travel industry report

TTA BULLETIN

A new report compiled by Tourism Economics on behalf of Arabian Travel Market (ATM) predicts that by 2030, total tourism spend in the Middle East will be 50% higher than in 2024, generating expenditure of nearly US\$350 billion.

The ATM Travel Trends Report 2025 reveals insights into the trends and transformations redefining the travel sector in the Middle East and worldwide, including the surge of business travel, the growth of the luxury segment, and the boom in regional sports tourism. The report highlights exceptional growth in Middle East travel spending, projected to exceed 2019 levels by 54% this year and anticipates an annual growth rate of over 7% from 2025 to 2030.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said: “The report’s findings confirm that travel growth in the Middle East is incredibly strong, with annual growth averaging more than 7% through 2030. Bold national visions, game-changing developments, and enhanced connectivity are some of the key factors driving this momentum.”

Underscoring the Middle East’s strong position in global tourism, inbound travel from outside the region is set to grow by 13% annually up to 2030 and outbound business travel forecast to surge at 9% per year.

European source markets make up 50% of all leisure travel to the Middle East, with India and the United Kingdom the top two inbound international leisure source markets. China is also a critical market, ranking third by value with leisure spend expected to increase by 130% by 2030. Furthermore, tourism nights by visitors from Asia Pacific and Africa, are expected to increase by over 100% between now and



2030.

For outbound travel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt dominate regional flows, while Thailand and the United Kingdom lead as preferred long-haul destinations.

The four largest airlines in the region – Emirates, Etihad Airways, Qatar Airways and Saudia – have placed nearly 780 aircraft orders with Boeing and Airbus, representing major expansions to their existing fleets. This significant investment underscores the region’s strategic focus on becoming a global aviation hub and meeting rising passenger demand over the coming decade.

The Middle East’s rise as a global hub for business events is another key highlight of the report, which states that spending on Middle East business travel will grow 1.5 times faster than the global average through to 2030. The region’s strategic location at the centre of Asia, Africa, and Europe supports business and leisure travel, with the latter on a particularly strong trajectory for growth.

The sector plays a vital role in developing the region’s reputation for hosting major events. It is expected to experience the second-fastest rate of business travel growth among all global regions, underscoring the increased potential for combining business and leisure travel, or ‘bleisure’.

ITB China 2025 is sold out

TTA BULLETIN

ITB China 2025, taking place from May 27–29 at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Center, is sold out. This year’s edition boasts a remarkable 30 percent increase in exhibition space compared to 2024 and brings together more than 700 exhibitors from 85 countries, and 1,400 buyers from all corners of China, underscoring China’s position as a dynamic and indispensable market in the global travel ecosystem.

The ITB China Conference, which runs in parallel to the show and is co-organised by China’s leading conference organizer TravelDaily, is set to welcome over 150 senior executives, procurement leaders, and industry experts from global tourism boards, airlines, hotel groups, leading travel enterprises, and travel agencies. Key themes will include China Business Travel, Themed & Customized Travel, and Innovations in Travel Technology. Featuring more than 60



ITB
CHINA

cutting-edge topics, the event will offer attendees deep industry insights and highlight emerging trends through a series of dynamic discussions—empowering participants to identify new opportunities in the evolving tourism landscape.

The sold-out announcement comes at a time of increasing global political and economic uncertainty, yet also unprecedented opportunity. Lydia Li, Director of ITB China, remarked, “The record growth of ITB China 2025 is a testament to a travel industry that is as resilient as it is innovative. By bringing together leading voices and cutting-edge solutions from around the globe, this year’s show once again proves that China remains at the center of the world’s travel narrative. Together with our industry partners, we are equipping attendees with tangible insights and fostering essential business relationships that will shape the travel landscape of tomorrow.”

Jetwing Hotels Awarded 19 Travellers’ Choice® Awards for 2025 by Tripadvisor®

TTA BULLETIN



Jetwing Hotels announced that 19 of their hotels have been recognized by TripAdvisor as 2025 Travellers’ Choice award winners, garnering the highest number of honours for a hotel group in Sri Lanka.

TripAdvisor’s Travellers’ Choice Award winners are among the top 10% of listings around the world on TripAdvisor. As the world’s largest travel guidance platform, TripAdvisor has unparalleled influence with travellers and diners. Jetwing Ayurveda Pavilions, Jetwing Beach, Jetwing Blue, Jetwing Colombo Seven, Jetwing Jaffna, Jetwing Kaduruketha, Jetwing Kandy Gallery, Jetwing Kurulubedda, Jetwing Lagoon Wellness, Jetwing Lake, Jetwing Lighthouse, Jetwing Saman Villas, Jetwing Sea, Jetwing St. Andrew’s, Jetwing Surf and Safari, Jetwing Vil Uyana, Jetwing Yala, and Jetwing Warwick Gardens, have all been recognized for their excellent service by TripAdvisor travellers. This award is based on genuine feedback from anyone in the community who has visited and left an authentic, first-hand review on TripAdvisor over a 12-month period, making it a valuable and trustworthy designation of travellers’ favorites.

In addition, Mermaid Hotel and Club received the coveted Travellers’ Choice Best of the Best award, placing it in the top 1% of listings globally. This distinction highlights the highest-rated destinations, accommodations, and experiences as reviewed by the TripAdvisor community.

Dmitri Cooray, Managing Director,

Jetwing Hotels, added, “It brings us immense joy to share that 19 of our properties have been recognized with the 2025 TripAdvisor Travellers’ Choice Awards, with Mermaid Hotel and Club being awarded the Travellers’ Choice Best of the Best award. This honor is a reflection of the heartfelt service and legendary Sri Lankan hospitality we offer every guest. Guest feedback is of paramount importance to us—it not only inspires our teams but also plays a vital role in shaping our journey of continuous improvement. I extend my sincere gratitude to our incredible teams across the island—your dedication and passion are the heart of our success. We are proud to continue delivering the exceptional experiences that travellers around the world have come to cherish.”

With a legacy spanning over half a century in the tourism industry, Jetwing Hotels has established itself as a pioneer in curating unique experiences and offering legendary Sri Lankan hospitality. As a family-owned brand, Jetwing continues to be a leading advocate for sustainability and responsible tourism, with ongoing initiatives focused on community upliftment, environment conservation, and resource efficiency. The brand’s diverse portfolio caters to a broad range of travellers under four segments: Jetwing Luxury Reserves, Jetwing Premium Hotels, Select Hotels, and Essentials, each offering a unique perspective on Sri Lanka’s rich cultural heritage and natural beauty.

Mum’s Special Day, Away From Home: Mother’s Day at Pegasus Reef

TTA BULLETIN

This May 11th, we rolled out the red carpet for the queens of our hearts — our beloved mothers. Pegasus Reef hosted a heartwarming Mother’s Day Celebration, inviting families to indulge mum in an unforgettable day away from the ordinary.

The Special Day Outing Package welcomed every guest with a refreshing drink and warm smiles. A sumptuous International Lunch Buffet and delightful Evening Tea with Snacks ensured that

mothers were treated to a feast fit for royalty.

Laughter echoed by the Poolside, where fun games and interactive activities created lasting memories. At our beautifully curated Photo Booth, smiles were captured, framed, and cherished.

This wasn’t just a celebration. It was a thank you, a hug, and a moment to let mothers know how deeply they are appreciated — even when away from home.

Travel Trade Sports Club's 9th Pool Tournament Unites the Tourism Industry in Friendly Rivalry

The Travel Trade Sports Club (TTSC) successfully concluded its 9th Pool Tournament, bringing together professionals from across the travel and tourism industry in a spirit of camaraderie, competition, and community.

The awards were presented by Dilshan Gnanapragasam (President, TTSC), Vivek Kerkoven (Social Secretary, TTSC), Prabath Wickramathilake (Committee Member – Airlines), Amri Noordeem (Committee Member – Travels), and Malith Silva (Director – Operations, Wingway Holidays).



HOTELS

Vesak at Pegasus Reef: A Celebration of Light, Love & Spirituality

TTA BULLETIN

This Vesak season, Pegasus Reef was bathed in the gentle glow of compassion and creativity. From luminous lanterns to heartfelt hymns, our property transformed into a sanctuary of spiritual celebration, capturing the essence of the sacred festival in every corner.

Our Lantern Making Workshop for Kids sparked imagination as tiny hands shaped vibrant colors into beautiful creations. The Kids' Vesak Art Corner echoed with laughter and brushstrokes, while families enjoyed quality time under a canopy of peace and festivity.

In honor of the long Vesak weekend, we

opened our hearts and doors with a Free Room Offer for Kids, making family bonding even more special.

Our talented team offered guests a soul-soothing performance of Bakthi Gee, creating a moment of reflection and joy beneath a moonlit sky. The hotel came alive with color and competition as departments faced off in the Inter-Department Lantern Contest — every entry telling its own glowing story.

From start to finish, Vesak at Pegasus Reef was not just celebrated — it was felt, shared, and remembered. Truly, a magical time where creativity met compassion.

Kurundu – Cinnamon Life Wellness Launches Exclusive Urban Wellness Club

TTA BULLETIN

Rooted in the healing spirit of Sri Lanka and inspired by the elemental balance of nature, Kurundu – Cinnamon Life Wellness is a sanctuary for modern living. Intimate, intuitive, and deeply personalised, Kurundu is where luxury takes the form of care—offering a place to slow down, realign, and rediscover balance.

Located within Cinnamon Life, Colombo's most dynamic lifestyle destination, Kurundu is expanding its offering with the launch of the Urban Wellness Club, an exclusive membership experience designed to bring wellness into the rhythm of everyday life.

Launching on June 6th, the Urban Wellness Club is a bespoke wellness lifestyle offering, limited to just 50 members. Designed for individuals who prioritise mindful living, the club offers:

- Unlimited access to wellness and movement areas, including the fitness center and group classes
- Use of the infinity and family pools
- A private members' lounge
- Complimentary treatments and personalised sessions with expert therapists and trainers



- Curated monthly privileges across dining, wellness, and stay experiences at Cinnamon Life

Kurundu's philosophy is anchored in the five elemental forces—Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water—each guiding the guest journey through strength, clarity, vitality, fluidity, and calm. Signature treatments such as the Five Elements Fusion Stone Massage, Tropical Body Bliss, and Evolution Luxurious Journey reflect this approach, with every experience tailored by Kurundu's team of expert therapists to meet each guest's unique needs.

"Our vision was to create more than a wellness centre, we wanted to build a sanctuary," shares the Kurundu Manager, Adrian Lomibao. "The membership is an invitation to experience wellness as a daily ritual, not a luxury reserved for occasional escape."

In addition to the Urban Wellness Club, Kurundu also offers an added benefit for returning guests—those who complete a set number of visits within a specified period are rewarded with a complimentary treatment, as a gesture of appreciation and encouragement to continue prioritising personal wellbeing.

The Urban Wellness Club opens June 6th. For membership enrolment or inquiries, contact the Kurundu team at +94-74-316-7793.

Hilton Colombo Unveils Bespoke Group Experiences for Corporate Travelers Seeking More Than Just Meetings

TTA BULLETIN

In the heart of Sri Lanka's vibrant capital, Hilton Colombo introduces a transformative Groups, Meetings & Events (GM&E) package curated to elevate corporate travel into a meaningful, memorable journey. Designed for organizations seeking connection beyond the boardroom, this exclusive offering combines business excellence and leisure enrichment—positioning the hotel as a go-to destination for immersive corporate retreats.

Starting at just USD 288 per night on a double-sharing basis for groups of 25 or more, the package invites guests to experience a well-rounded itinerary that seamlessly blends productivity, wellness, and local discovery. Beyond the elegant event spaces and world-class amenities, guests enjoy an array of thoughtfully crafted inclusions:

- Executive floor accommodations with elevated comforts
- Complimentary airport transfers
- Daily laundry service (3 pieces per guest)



- Complimentary breakout rooms for seamless collaboration
- Half-board dining at the award-winning Graze Kitchen (lunch and dinner)
- Morning yoga sessions on the serene Lotus Lawn
- A climate-conscious dining journey with Hilton's tree-planting initiative
- A signature yacht farewell party at Port City
- Curated cocktails at SunsetBlu, Colombo's first all-day club

Available for bookings through 31 October 2025, this limited-time offer is ideal for MICE, incentive travel, and team retreats. With a promise of purposeful travel, guests are empowered to connect, create, and celebrate in style.

Marriott Marquis Dubai Makes Sri Lankan Debut Through Exclusive Partnership with Timeless Trails

TTA BULLETIN

In a landmark promotional event held at the prestigious ITC Ratnadipa in Colombo on Monday, 26th May, Marriott Marquis Dubai – Jewel of the Creek was introduced to the Sri Lankan market for the very first time. The event, hosted in collaboration with Timeless Trails – a Sri Lankan-owned Destination Management Company (DMC) based in Dubai – marks the launch of a strategic partnership that brings one of Dubai's newest and most exciting five-star hotels to the attention of Sri Lanka's outbound travel sector.

Held at the elegant Sangam 1 ballroom, the evening brought together an exclusive audience of travel industry professionals, including senior representatives from leading outbound travel agencies, the national airline, and key corporate travel partners. Attendees were treated to an immersive presentation of the Marriott Marquis Dubai – Jewel of the Creek, showcasing its unique offerings tailored for both leisure and business travelers.

Strategically located near Dubai International Airport and Deira City Centre, Marriott Marquis Dubai is set within the vibrant Jewel of the Creek development. With easy access to Downtown Dubai, the Burj Khalifa, and Dubai Mall, the hotel features an expansive selection of modern rooms across 15 categories – many offering panoramic skyline and Creek views. Guests can also opt for 1-, 2-, or 3-bedroom apartments with fully equipped kitchens, making the property ideal for long stays and family travel.



Highlighting its appeal to MICE and group travel markets, the hotel boasts approximately 770 rooms with 200 twin beds and guaranteed interconnecting rooms, along with a dedicated conference floor, a 24-hour health club, spa with Moroccan and Turkish hammams, an outdoor pool, and six unique dining venues. Its versatility positions it as a preferred choice for incentive groups, corporate travel, and discerning leisure guests alike.

The event was graced by Fredrik Reinisch, General Manager of Marriott Marquis Dubai, and Binni Negi, Associate Director of Sales, who introduced the brand's vision and offerings. Representing Timeless Trails were Darshana Cabraal, Chief Executive Officer, and Shamraz Azeez, Chief Operating Officer, who emphasized the growing appetite for high-quality travel experiences among Sri Lankan travelers and the potential for strengthened UAE–Sri Lanka travel ties.

"Through this partnership, we aim to deliver seamless, curated experiences for Sri Lankan travelers visiting Dubai, whether for business, leisure, or group travel," noted Darshana Cabraal.

Discover Your Sanctuary

Unwind at Occidental Paradise Dambulla

As the sun dips below the horizon, casting a warm glow across the landscape, Occidental Paradise Dambulla reveals itself as more than just a destination; it is a tapestry of experiences woven into the very fabric of your stay.

Here, you can immerse yourself in the island's rich history, indulge in the flavours of authentic Sri Lankan cuisine, and unwind in a sanctuary designed for your comfort. Each moment spent within these enchanting surroundings becomes a cherished memory, beckoning you to return time and again.

We invite you to discover Occidental Paradise Dambulla, where every visit promises relaxation and rejuvenation, enveloped in the warmth of genuine Sri Lankan hospitality.

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Browns

HOTELS & RESORTS

Together We Achieve More: Outbound Training at Pegasus Reef

TTA BULLETIN

Teamwork took center stage on May 16th, 2025, as Pegasus Reef hosted an electrifying Outbound Training Program exclusively for our HODs and Executives.

Under the dynamic guidance of Mr. Shehan Pilapitiya, renowned for his transformative leadership sessions, participants engaged in a half-day challenge designed to ignite synergy and sharpen team dynamics.

Clad in sports kits and high spirits, our team dove into thrilling Team-Building

Activities on the hotel’s scenic North Lawn. The natural setting provided the perfect backdrop for interactive problem-solving, leadership games, and motivation-packed challenges.

It wasn’t just training — it was a celebration of collaboration, energy, and purpose. The event proved that with the right mindset and unity, Together Everyone Achieves More.

The spirit of teamwork didn’t just rise — it soared.

Sips, Scones & Society: Colombo’s Most Stylish High Tea Lands at Gatz, Cinnamon Life

TTA BULLETIN

If “The Great Gatsby” had a fabulous younger cousin living it up in the 2020s, they’d definitely be hanging out at Gatz — Cinnamon Life’s speakeasy-inspired lounge where vintage glamour meets modern-day charm. With glowy lights, golden glam, and cocktails that sparkle (with or without the buzz), it’s the perfect spot to sip, snack, and soak in the vibes. And guess what? It’s now hosting Colombo’s chicest High Tea.

High Tea at Gatz is a full-blown affair — served up every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 3:00 to 6:00 PM. Picture this: the sun dipping over the Indian Ocean, city lights beginning to twinkle, and a table full of bite-sized delights begging to be shared.

The main event? A gorgeous three-tiered stand loaded with treats — both sweet and savory — that are just as Instagram-worthy as they are delicious. Start with Cold Delights like tuna tataki on grain toast, truffle mushroom duxelle with prosciutto, and smoky mackerel rilletes on charcoal bread. Fancy, right? Then things get cozy with Warm Delights — think flaky chicken pies, spicy veggie spring rolls, and a cute little beef slider oozing with caramelized onions and melty cheese.

But save room, because the Sweet Endings are pure magic: dark chocolate tart, berry velvet cake, strawberry tarts, caramel petit choux, yuzu macarons... and yes, there are warm scones with Chantilly cream and fruit preserve. (Because let’s be real — no High Tea is complete without scones.)

Got dietary preferences? No worries — vegetarian options are always available. Everyone’s invited to the party at Gatz.

Now let’s talk drinks. Whether you’re all about



the bubbles or staying dry, there’s something fabulous waiting for you. The Zero Proof cocktails are bold, beautiful, and booze-free — like the Jazz Age (hello butterfly pea and Ceylon spice) or Abstract, a tropical blast of hibiscus, lime leaf, and pineapple.

Prefer something classic? Choose from an elegant selection of Ceylon teas, or cozy up with a cappuccino, espresso, or hot chocolate. Perfect for chatting, chilling, or celebrating something just because.

The magic doesn’t end at teatime. When the clock strikes 6:00, Gatz slides into Golden Hour mode — from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, the vibe shifts, the music turns up, and the champagne starts flowing. Sip on dreamy cocktails, groove to live local artists, and take in that golden glow. It’s the ultimate after-tea treat.

So go ahead — throw on something fabulous, text your friends, and make a date with Gatz. Because in the heart of Colombo, a little slice of sparkle is waiting. And it tastes amazing.



Avani Barbarons Seychelles to Re-launch Following Major Transformation, Elevated to Avani+

TTA BULLETIN



Minor Hotels, a global hospitality group that owns and operates over 560 hotels in 57 countries in Asia Pacific, the Middle East, Africa, the Indian Ocean, Europe and the Americas, announces the upcoming relaunch of Avani+ Barbarons Seychelles. Set to reopen on 16th June 2025, the reimagined resort marks the next chapter for one of Seychelles’ most notable beachfront escapes, unveiling a refreshed look and elevated guest experiences that reflect the contemporary sophistication of Avani.

The property is set on the west coast of Mahé Island, just 30 minutes from Seychelles International Airport. Situated against lush tropical gardens and offering direct access to pristine white-sand beaches, Avani+ Barbarons Seychelles will reopen with 192 fully refurbished guest rooms and suites, including brand-new Lagoon Access Rooms that bring guests even closer to the resort’s expanded lagoon-style pool.

The relaunch will also introduce a vibrant dining scene that celebrates island culture and coastal flavours. From globally inspired bites at Pti-Bazar to flame-grilled feasts at Somewhere and hand-rolled sushi at SEYUMAI, there’s something for every craving. Zil and Lagon Bars serve poolside sips and snacks, while Bar Barons blends wholesome plates with signature cocktails.

Guests can unwind at AvaniSpa, explore the surrounding waters with snorkelling and water sports, or discover Seychelles’ vibrant Creole heritage. The resort’s three flexible meeting spaces, ocean-front location, and curated experiences make it an ideal setting for destination weddings, incentive travel and executive retreats.

“We are pleased to announce the upcoming relaunch of Avani+ Seychelles Barbarons Resort, which will reposition the property as a standout lifestyle destination,” said Dillip Rajakarier, Group CEO of Minor International. “With enhanced facilities including innovative new room types and refreshed dining and wellness offerings, we’re confident the relaunch will add tremendous value to the Avani portfolio and resonate strongly with both new and returning guests.”

With its effortless island charm and innovative dining destinations, Avani+ Barbarons Seychelles is poised to set a new benchmark for premium hospitality in the Indian Ocean nation.

For more information or bookings, please visit www.avanihotels.com/en/seychelles-barbarons, email reservations.vbar@avanihotels.com, or call +248 467 3000.



ONYX Hospitality Group Showcases Strategic Growth and New Offerings at ITB China 2025

TTA BULLETIN

ONYX Hospitality Group, a prominent player in the Asia-Pacific hospitality sector, is set to make a strong impression at ITB China 2025, taking place from 27th – 29th May at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center. With a focused growth strategy and dynamic product offering, ONYX is reaffirming its commitment to the Chinese market—a consistently top-performing source market for the group.

China remains one of ONYX’s leading geo-source markets, ranking among the top three, and continues to contribute a significant share of total portfolio revenue year-to-date.

“We continue to see robust performance from the Chinese market in 2025, across both leisure and MICE segments,” said Yuthachai Charanachitta, CEO of ONYX Hospitality Group. “Our approach this year is agile and data-driven—responding to shifting travel behaviours, particularly last-minute bookings and the need for flexibility. With exciting new properties and tailored MICE offerings that meet evolving demands, we’re well-positioned for continued growth. We are excited to showcase our ambitious forward-thinking plans and world-class portfolio at ITB China.”

Advancing its vision to become “the best medium-sized hospitality management company in Southeast Asia,” ONYX Hospitality Group remains driven by an ethos of “a tailored approach to hospitality.” This commitment is reflected in its diverse portfolio, attentive service philosophy, and adaptable strategies designed to meet the unique needs of different markets—particularly the evolving preferences of Chinese travellers.

At this year’s ITB China, ONYX will showcase a selection of newly opened and strategically significant properties, highlighting the wide variety within its portfolio, catering to different market segments and traveller needs:

- Amari Colombo, Sri Lanka – A landmark beachfront hotel that blends contemporary elegance with Sri Lankan cultural charm.
- Amari Vientiane, Laos – A new entrant to the group’s Indochina portfolio, offering refined urban comfort in the heart of the Laotian capital.
- Amari Bangsaen, Thailand – Positioned as both a rising leisure destination and an emerging MICE hub, this property plays a key role in ONYX’s strategy to expand into secondary destinations with high growth potential. Amari Bangsaen is an exciting new addition to the portfolio, offering close proximity to Bangkok and Pattaya and bringing fresh opportunities for both leisure and business travellers.

ONYX continues to strengthen its City MICE and Urban MICE footprint by offering versatile event venues situated in prime city centres as well as vibrant



secondary urban destinations. This broad spectrum caters to diverse event needs—from large-scale international conferences to more intimate, bespoke gatherings.

Amari Bangkok and Amari Pattaya remain flagship MICE destinations thanks to their strategic locations, comprehensive meeting facilities, and seamless integration of business and leisure amenities—making them ideal for hosting high-profile conferences, corporate events, and incentive trips in Thailand’s bustling capital and popular eastern seaboard.

Meanwhile, Amari Bangsaen is rapidly emerging as a unique MICE venue, with accessible beachfront meeting spaces and close proximity to Bangkok. Its combination of inspiring coastal surroundings and modern facilities positions it perfectly for hybrid and destination events, tapping into growing demand for alternative meeting destinations.

In line with ONYX’s brand evolution and its continued pursuit of exceeding guest expectations and delivering excellence, several properties have undergone strategic repositioning to better meet the needs of their distinct guest segments.

Oriental Residence Bangkok has been elevated into a refined luxury sanctuary, catering to discerning, high-end travellers who seek understated elegance, spacious residences, and personalised services in the heart of the city. Its blend of contemporary design and warm Thai hospitality makes it a preferred choice for long-stay guests and sophisticated urban explorers alike.

Amari Don Muang Airport Bangkok is now positioned as a premier transit and MICE hotel, offering unparalleled convenience with direct access to Don Mueang International Airport via a covered walkway. Equipped with modern event facilities and seamless connectivity to Bangkok’s city centre, the hotel is perfectly suited to business travellers, event organisers, as well as leisure travellers seeking convenient and efficient accommodations near the airport.

Understanding the flexibility and spontaneity that characterise the Chinese travel market, ONYX is actively implementing a dynamic commercial strategy—optimising rates, availability, and targeted offers to better align with last-minute booking trends. The group’s strategy also includes expanding the MICE portfolio across a broader range of destinations and product categories, ensuring options that meet the needs of both large-scale international events and small group gatherings.

Hilton Hotels in Sri Lanka Launch ‘Forever Starts Here’ Wedding Campaign with Exclusive Offers Across Iconic Venues

TTA BULLETIN

Hilton Hotels in Sri Lanka have launched ‘Forever Starts Here,’ a limited-time campaign designed to help couples plan their make dream weddings with exclusive packaged and elevated experiences. Available throughout June 2025, this campaign offers a range of custom benefits across Hilton Colombo, Hilton Colombo Residences, and DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort, blending heartfelt celebration with signature Hilton hospitality.

Hilton Colombo invites couples to celebrate their love with an exclusive wedding package. At the heart of the celebration is the Grand Ballroom, a spacious and elegant venue designed to accommodate up to 300 guests. Available for lunch receptions, the Grand Ballroom offers packages starting from Rs. 10,000 per person for 2025 and Rs. 11,000 per person for 2026 (terms and conditions apply).

Hilton Colombo offers couples the convenience of on-site access to the renowned Ramani Fernando Salon, one of Sri Lanka’s most recognized salon chains. With expert stylists, couples can prepare for their big day with professional care and expertise, ensuring they look and feel their best. The property also features picturesque locations perfect for wedding photography, allowing every magical moment to be beautifully captured against stunning natural and architectural backdrops.

OFFERINGS:

- Complimentary two-night honeymoon stay on a bed and breakfast basis at Hilton Kuala Lumpur
- Dining voucher for the first anniversary
- Complimentary stay for the couple on the wedding day, including breakfast
- Complimentary dance floor and band stage
- Complimentary day-use changing room
- Complimentary Champagne fountain structure
- Special room rates for wedding guests
- Waiver on beverage service fees and corkage fees
- Complimentary seat covers

At Hilton Colombo Residences, weddings are elevated to a new level of elegance, thoughtfully designed to reflect intimacy, sophistication, and heartfelt celebration. Couples planning to celebrate their wedding between 1 September 2025 and 31 October 2026 are invited to make their bookings with the hotel to be eligible for exclusive benefits starting from Rs. 7,700 per person for a minimum of 200 guests. Couples who confirm their wedding during the campaign period will receive a complimentary two-night honeymoon stay on a bed and breakfast basis at Hilton



Sukhumvit Bangkok (terms and conditions apply).

The venue combines modern technology with a touch of timeless charm. State-of-the-art audio facilities ensure every word and every note resonates perfectly. Drop-down multimedia screens, plasma displays, smartboards, and kiosks allow cherished memories to take center stage. At the same time, a customizable lighting system creates the perfect ambiance with a palette of colors tailored to the couple’s vision. The ballroom offers flexible partitioning options for Islamic weddings, ensuring inclusivity and comfort for every guest.

Adding to the magic is the picturesque third-level poolside setting, where timeless moments are captured against the stunning backdrop of the iconic Lotus Tower. This serene and elegant location transforms every photograph into a work of art, immortalizing the day’s most special moments.

OFFERINGS:

- Complimentary changing room on the wedding day
- Complimentary stay on a bed and breakfast basis at the hotel on the wedding day
- Complimentary band stage, dance floor, and linen
- Traditional oil lamp
- Table for gifts and the cake
- Complimentary locations for photography (lobby/poolside/‘Say I Do’ corner)

For couples envisioning a wedding that seamlessly blends elegance, tradition, and breathtaking beauty, DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort is the ultimate venue. Nestled along the serene shores of Lake Weerawila, this premium resort promises an unforgettable celebration, where every detail is designed to create cherished memories. Couples planning to celebrate their wedding between 5 June and 31 October 2025 are invited to make their bookings with the resort to enjoy these exclusive benefits, at Rs. 10,900 nett per person.

The resort’s highlight is the stunning Grand Rajawarna Ballroom, an expansive space accommodating up to 600 guests. With state-of-the-art audio, visual, and customizable lighting systems, the ballroom perfectly captures every heartfelt word and magical moment. Adjacent to the ballroom are two dedicated dressing rooms, offering private and comfortable preparation spaces for the couple.

Fairway Colombo Brings Art & Jazz to Life on Hospital Street

TTA BULLETIN

Fairway Colombo hosts Art & Jazz at Fairway Colombo on Hospital Street in Colombo Fort every last Saturday and Sunday of the month. This vibrant weekend celebration unites creativity, community, and culture in one of the city’s most dynamic spaces.

Fully funded by Fairway Colombo, the initiative underscores the hotel’s ongoing commitment to empowering Sri Lankan artists. By offering a high-visibility, cost-free platform, the event allows creators to showcase their work without any commission or stall fees, ensuring full creative freedom and accessibility for all.

The experience includes live painting sessions, spray painting, and a communal canvas that invites participation from visitors of all ages. Adding to the ambiance, live jazz bands perform throughout the weekend, filling the air

with soulful melodies and transforming Hospital Street into one of Colombo’s most engaging cultural hotspots.

Fairway Colombo is also proud to be the first hotel in Sri Lanka to introduce AI robot technology into its hospitality services. The hotel currently deploys robots for room service and restaurant operations—enhancing efficiency while delivering a futuristic guest experience.

Looking ahead, Fairway Colombo plans to introduce humanoid robots for guest relations and concierge services, continuing its vision of merging cutting-edge technology with warm, intuitive hospitality.

Through initiatives like Art & Jazz and its pioneering use of AI, Fairway Colombo reaffirms its dual mission: to elevate local talent and set new standards in innovative guest service.

ONYX Hospitality Group Unveils “Amari Bangsaen” - A Vibrant New Beachfront Destination

TTA BULLETIN

ONYX Hospitality Group, a leading hospitality management company in Southeast Asia with a diverse portfolio of hotels, resorts, serviced apartments, and luxury residences, continues to pursue its vision of becoming "The Best Medium-sized Hospitality Management Company in Southeast Asia." The company has introduced its latest stylish property, Amari Bangsaen, acknowledging Bangsaen’s appeal as a key beachfront destination for Thai and international travellers seeking a coastal escape near Bangkok. It is dedicated to turning exceptional experiences into lasting memories.

Located directly across from the iconic Bangsaen Beach, Amari Bangsaen is a relaxing beachfront retreat in the city's heart, offering effortless beach access. Whether it's a fun-filled family getaway, a lively trip with friends, or a romantic escape for couples, guests can enjoy a bustling seaside vacation experience. At Amari Bangsaen, every stay is thoughtfully crafted to create unforgettable moments in every dimension. Guests can expect full-service hospitality that meets international standards, from meticulously designed accommodations that blend style and comfort to a wide selection of room types—from deluxe rooms to spacious suites. With a total of 154 rooms, the hotel caters to all lifestyles, including business travellers visiting nearby industrial estates. For those seeking a venue near Bangkok for meetings, corporate events, or romantic weddings with stunning views of the Bangsaen sea, Amari Bangsaen offers 15 medium to large function rooms that can host up to 1,000 guests.

Yuthachai Charanachit, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ONYX Hospitality Group, said, “Amari Bangsaen is another



remarkable addition to the Amari brand, positioned as an upper-upscale hotel offering full-service hospitality. The hotel is situated in a high-potential location with steady economic growth, particularly in the tourism sector. One key reason for adding this property is its highly convenient location—just a short drive from Bangkok, close to Pattaya, and near popular destinations in Chonburi province. It’s intended to meet the diverse needs of today’s travellers, whether they’re here for leisure, business, or large-scale events.”

In addition to its contemporary and thoughtfully designed rooms, Amari Bangsaen offers a variety of dining options crafted to delight every palate. At the heart of the culinary experience is Amaya Food Gallery, an all-day dining restaurant that features a harmonious blend of Asian and Western flavours. Guests can enjoy a delicious buffet breakfast, à la carte selections, or set menus for lunch and dinner—perfect for food lovers eager to explore Thai and international cuisine. Guests can also indulge in a signature Thai cocktail, thoughtfully crafted to reflect the charm of Thai hospitality, at Maitree Bar. For a more laid-back vibe, head to Aqua Eatery & Bar, the perfect spot to unwind by the large swimming pool with refreshing drinks, tasty snacks, and a daily Happy Hour promotion. Craving a seaside setting? Aloha Beach Café offers it all—great atmosphere, delicious food, and creative cocktails.

Connaissance De Ceylan Champions Spiritual Tourism with "One Buddha One World" Pilgrimage

TTA BULLETIN



Sri Lanka is set to host an extraordinary gathering of spiritual devotees as One Buddha One World brings together 80 participants from Taiwan, China, India, Thailand, Bhutan, Vietnam, Laos, Bangladesh, Nepal, Singapore, and Indonesia. From 28th May to 3rd June, the group will journey through Sri Lanka’s revered Buddhist heritage sites, including Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya, Dambulla, and Kandy, immersing themselves in the island’s rich spiritual tapestry.

Spearheaded by Venerable Mugunuwela Anuruddha Thero, the Secretary General of the All-Island Buddha Sasana Council of Sri Lanka, the tour will reach its highlight on 31st May with the Inauguration Ceremony of One Buddha One World at the picturesque Aliya Resort & Spa. This special event will see an assembly of 300 Bhikkhus and laypersons, joining in a

traditional dāna (almsgiving) ceremony, reflecting the enduring Buddhist traditions of compassion and unity.

This landmark gathering is made possible through the ground handling of Connaissance De Ceylan a leading destination management company in Sri Lanka, known for curating authentic, transformative travel experiences. Its hospitality division, Thema Collection, manages boutique hotels and resorts including the eco-luxury Aliya Resort & Spa, the perfect venue for this milestone event with stunning views of Sigiriya Rock and a blend of modern comfort with traditional Sri Lankan hospitality.

As One Buddha One World unfolds, it not only strengthens bonds between nations but also reaffirms Sri Lanka’s role as a beacon of spiritual harmony in the global community.

Turyaa Chennai Marks a Decade of Hospitality

TTA BULLETIN

Turyaa Chennai, a premier five-star deluxe classified hotel under the Aitken Spence Hotels portfolio, proudly celebrates a decade of redefining hospitality in one of South India’s most dynamic urban corridors. Conceived by the visionary entrepreneur and Late Chairman of Aitken Spence PLC, Deshamanya D.H.S. Jayawardena, Turyaa Chennai was built on the belief that Aitken Spence warmth and world-class hospitality could find a meaningful home in India. Ten years on, his legacy continues—alive in every guest experience, every team member’s dedication, and every milestone the hotel celebrates.

Since its opening in 2015, Turyaa Chennai has become a trusted name in Chennai—offering warm service and contemporary comfort. Strategically located along Chennai’s IT expressway, the hotel has grown into a hospitality landmark for business travellers, international travellers, and local tastemakers. Its vibrant dining concepts, spacious rooms and suites, rooftop leisure areas, and exceptional service standards have made it a preferred address in the city.

To mark its 10th anniversary on 15th of May 2025, Turyaa Chennai is hosting a month-long series of celebrations in honour of its legacy and the people who helped shape it. These include religious blessings, a celebratory dinner for loyal guests and partners, an awards ceremony for team members, and culinary showcas-



es that nod to the hotel's South Indian and Sri Lankan heritage.

As a proud extension of its values, the hotel is also donating wheelchairs to Tamil Nadu Railways—a gesture aimed at enhancing accessibility and mobility for those in need. This community-driven initiative reflects the heart of our Late Chairman, Deshamanya D H S Jayawardena and Aitken Spence Hotels’ ongoing commitment to meaningful impact, guided by a brand philosophy where sustainability, inclusivity, and care are non-negotiable.

Stasshani Jayawardena, Chairperson of Aitken Spence Hotel Holdings PLC stated: “Today, as we celebrate ten years, we’re not just marking an anniversary—we’re celebrating values, people, and the vibrant spirit of connection that makes Turyaa so special. We are grateful to Chennai for embracing us as one of their own.”

Over the past decade, Turyaa Chennai has welcomed world travellers, renowned artists, corporate leaders, and local patrons through its doors. With 140+ rooms and suites, contemporary conference spaces, and international culinary experiences, the hotel continues to set benchmarks in Chennai’s hospitality scene.

This Father’s Day, Honour Dad at Cinnamon Life’s ‘Retro Throwback with Dad’

TTA BULLETIN

Fatherhood is more than a role — it’s a lifelong journey of love, guidance, strength, and quiet sacrifice. This June, Cinnamon Life pays tribute to the men who have helped shape our lives with wisdom, laughter, and unwavering support. On Saturday, 14th June 2025, GATZ at Cinnamon Life invites you to celebrate these everyday heroes with ‘Retro Throwback with Dad’, a joyous, music-filled evening that honours the past while creating new memories for the future.

Held the night before Father’s Day, this event is designed to bring generations together through the universal language of music, style, and celebration. From 6 PM onwards, GATZ will light up with the soulful charm of the ‘70s, ‘80s, and ‘90s — a throwback to the days when many of our dads were dancing to the same beats. With performances by Sohan and The X-Periments and DJ Mirage, the night promises a nostalgic soundtrack paired with themed cocktails, bottle deals, and a celebration of retro fashion. Guests are encouraged to dress up in vintage style for a chance to win the “Best Dressed” title, while the themed photo booth and ‘Dad & Me’ Polaroid station offer beautiful moments to cherish and display on our Memory Wall.

At Cinnamon Life, we believe that moments of connection and joy help shape the soul of a city. Just as fathers help nurture the dreams and values of their children, we strive to nurture the heartbeat of Colombo — bringing people together through culture, celebration, and shared experiences. ‘Retro Throwback with Dad’ is more than a party; it’s a tribute to the influence of fathers and a reflection of the vibrant, inclusive spirit at Cinnamon Life.

The Father’s Day weekend continues

with specially curated experiences across our restaurants and spaces. On Sunday, 15 June, Quizine will host a celebratory buffet (Rs. 9,500 Nett) featuring live entertainment, two pints of beer, unlimited soft drinks, and the option to add unlimited beer for Rs. 2,500++ per person. Meanwhile, Staten will offer an indulgent four-course Father’s Day menu (Rs. 15,000++) with a complimentary cocktail at GATZ for all set menu guests.

Families of four or more dining at Bistro, Yoroko, Indiya, or Sapphire Dragon will receive a 20% discount, encouraging guests to honour dad with his favourite cuisine, surrounded by those who matter most. GATZ will continue the weekend celebrations with 30% off select bottles of spirits on both Saturday and Sunday, and Sweet Lab will be offering Father’s Day-themed cakes and handcrafted chocolates from 5th to 15th June — sweet tokens of love for the man who has always been there.

This Father’s Day, join Cinnamon Life in celebrating the enduring love and leadership of dads everywhere. Let’s raise a glass to their strength, style, and the stories they’ve passed down — and let’s do it the Cinnamon Life way: vibrant, meaningful, and full of heart.



Shangri-La Colombo Unveils a New Collection of Artisanal Chocolate Cakes

TTA BULLETIN

Shangri-La Colombo has officially lifted the cloche on its newest culinary temptations: a thoughtfully curated collection of artisanal chocolate cakes, launched at an exclusive cake tasting ceremony held this week. Available to guests and cake enthusiasts starting 1 June 2025, the range will be sold at the hotel’s Sapphyr Lounge and through the Shangri-La eBoutique, making it effortless to bring home a slice of refined indulgence.

Taking centre stage is the Pettah Tea Mousse Cake, the hotel’s signature creation and a heartfelt tribute to Colombo’s iconic Yaara tea. Drawing inspiration from the lively lanes of Pettah, this refined dessert brings together the warmth of Dimbula tea—Sri Lanka’s most celebrated high-grown brew—with fragrant cardamom and sweet condensed milk, echoing the rich character of street-side tea culture. With an almond sponge base, molten crèmeux centre, and mousse light as mist, the Pettah Tea Mousse Cake is not only layered in flavour, but steeped in meaning.

This signature cake is also a proud expression of Shangri-La’s global Rooted in Nature programme—a culinary initiative that celebrates sustainable dining through the use of locally and ethically sourced ingredients. Rooted in Nature aims to support regional communities and highlight the natural bounty of each destination. Through carefully selected local produce, the Pettah Tea Mousse Cake becomes more than dessert—it becomes a story of provenance, purpose, and place.

Complementing the signature are five new handcrafted cakes, each created with finesse, playful textures, bold flavours, and elegant detail:

- Café Ivory Gateaux — A



walnut sponge layered with mocha white chocolate crèmeux and chocolate mousse, brightened by a zesty orange compote. A cake designed for reflective moments and quiet coffee conversations.

- The H2 — A harmonious collision of hazelnut praline, milk chocolate, and a burst of passionfruit cream—a tropical escape in every bite.

- Burn Milk Coffee Layer Cake — Espresso-soaked Vienna sponge meets coffee caramel cream in this bold yet comforting ode to your daily brew.

- Milk Chocolate Caramel Pear — A soft sponge wrapped in milk chocolate mousse, layered with pear compote, caramel crèmeux, and a crisp butter crunch for texture and warmth.

- Almond Crunch — A buttery almond base with caramel crèmeux, whipped chocolate mousse, and a delicate milk glaze—both playful and elegant.

“This new collection is about more than just sweetness,” said Shangri-La Colombo General Manager Herve Duboscq. “It’s about flavour, memory, and place—each cake tells a story, whether it’s of Pettah’s vibrant tea culture or the quiet indulgence of an afternoon treat.”

Whether celebrating a special occasion or simply elevating the everyday, these cakes are a delicious invitation to pause, savour, and share.

SriLankan Airlines Welcomes New Airbus A330-200 to Fleet

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines proudly welcomed the latest addition to its fleet – the Airbus A330-200, bearing the registration 4R-ALT. Marking a significant step in enhancing the airline’s long-haul capabilities and passenger experience, the aircraft made a low fly-over across Colombo before landing at Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA), where it was greeted with a traditional water cannon salute.

The arrival was witnessed by senior officials of SriLankan Airlines, who hailed the

aircraft as a key milestone in the airline’s continued commitment to offering world-class service and comfort. The A330-200, known for its advanced features and improved fuel efficiency, is expected to elevate the travel experience for passengers on both regional and long-haul routes.

This addition reflects the airline’s ongoing efforts to modernize its fleet and strengthen its position as the flag carrier of Sri Lanka.



SriLankan Cares Empowers Youth for Mangrove Conservation with Forest Department

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Cares, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of SriLankan Airlines, recently joined hands with the Forest Department of Sri Lanka, 100 local fishermen and 40 school children to lead an awareness and cleanup drive in the Negombo Lagoon. Home to some of South Asia's richest mangrove ecosystems, Sri Lanka's coastal forests play a vital role in protecting shorelines and combating climate change. With pollution posing a growing threat, particularly in the Gampaha and Puttalam districts, this initiative was a meaningful step in engaging future generations in environmental stewardship.

Saminda Perera, Head of marketing at SriLankan Airlines, explaining the significance of these collaborative initiatives, stated, "SriLankan Cares understands the importance of committing to environmental causes in partnership with our communities, conservation organisations and regulatory bodies. By fostering collaboration, we aim to protect Sri Lanka's natural heritage in ways that also resonate with customers, who increasingly favour brands committed to sustainability."

A crucial aspect of the programme was the participation of 40 children from Ellakkala national school, WP NG Gonsalvez College Pamunugama and the



Sunday School of St. Mary's Church, Negombo. Educating and involving young minds today is key to nurturing environmentally responsible adults tomorrow. Together with the children, the initiative highlighted the importance of preserving mangroves – turning awareness into action to protect local ecosystems and the livelihoods of fishing communities.

The programme also involved a collaborative research study with the Forest Department on public awareness and perceptions of mangrove ecosystems, sampling over 100 households from the area. Insights from the study will be used to develop long-term, sustainable solutions for protecting the country's mangrove ecosystems.

As the national carrier, SriLankan Airlines is uniquely positioned to lead conservation efforts. By partnering locally and internationally on strategic action and research, the airline intends to play a significant role in safeguarding the country's biodiversity through community-driven efforts for a more sustainable future.

Hahnair unveils Distriply One, the first NDC product from the new brand, Distriply by Hahnair

TTA BULLETIN

Hahnair, today announced the launch of Distriply One, the debut product under the recently launched Distriply by Hahnair brand. Based on the NDC (New Distribution Capability) standard, Distriply One allows all travel sellers, including independent and non-accredited agents, to access an extensive portfolio of air travel content, ready for immediate booking.

"Distriply One is our response to an industry need for accessible and efficient NDC solutions", says Rachel Pascall, Chief Commercial Officer of Distriply. "It levels the playing field for smaller and mid-sized agencies, as it does not require large upfront investments, extensive training or contract negotiations. Its user-friendly interface and easy implementation ensure quick connectivity and immediate business results."

In line with Distriply's slogan, 'Connect. Simplify. Grow.', the product emphasises operational efficiency and agent-centric functionality, designed to increase business results and customer satisfaction. Distriply One users also benefit from extensive support delivered by a team of experts, including dedicated customer success managers.



Among the extensive servicing features offered by Distriply One are the option to seamlessly modify reservations, manage schedule changes, cancellations, and refunds, and upgrade the travel experience with convenient upselling functionalities.

Launching at the ASTA Travel Advisor Conference in Salt Lake City, USA, Distriply One is initially available in the US market. An ambitious roadmap foresees a swift global rollout, with a focus on bringing Distriply One to the European, Latin American and Southern African markets. Travel agencies interested in Distriply One can enter a priority list by registering at distriply.com/registration. Further Distriply products will soon be announced, including solutions that also cater to areas like alternative forms of payment and loyalty programmes.

Emirates to reintroduce Damascus services from 16 July

TTA BULLETIN



Emirates is set to reintroduce flights to Damascus from 16 July 2025*. Operations were suspended to the Syrian capital in 2012, and the return of services follow a comprehensive evaluation in conjunction with the UAE GCAA.

The airline will initially start with three weekly services on Monday, Wednesday and Sunday, with plans to expand to four weekly flights from 2 August* with an additional flight on Saturday. Emirates will expand its Damascus services to daily operations, effective 26 October*.

Emirates' services to Damascus will operate with a 302-seater Boeing 777-200LR and is planned to depart Dubai as EK 913 at 1200hrs, arriving in Damascus International Airport at 1410hrs local time. The return flight, EK 914 will depart Damascus at 1630hrs, arriving in Dubai at 2030hrs local time.**

The flights will open up new opportunities for travellers to conveniently connect to and from the airline's network of nearly 150 destinations and will support the UAE's efforts to strengthen bilateral ties and support Syrian aspirations to rebuild and attract foreign investment across key sectors such as energy, construction and agriculture.

Emirates customers flying to and from Damascus will also benefit from the airline's codeshare partnership with flydubai, which will complement its flight schedule and provide more options and convenience when flying in and out of the Syrian capital.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline and Group said: "Emirates is pleased to restart operations to Damascus and support Syria's road ahead by providing better choice and connectivity, essential economic links for inwards investment as well as opening new trade lanes and global market access for the country. Re-establishing air travel and connectivity is also good news for our customers that make up the expansive Syrian

diaspora across the Americas, Europe and the GCC, who are eager to fly back home and reconnect to their roots, and leverage their knowledge, skills, expertise and resources in ongoing development efforts.

We would like to thank the Syrian authorities for their support in strengthening connectivity between Dubai and Damascus and look forward to boosting links to and from the country through our regularly scheduled operations."

The UAE and Syria's trade volumes reached US \$680 million (AED 2.5 billion) in 2024¹, a 23% increase over the previous year, and the new flights will further stimulate vital trade ties. The UAE's thriving Syrian community of over 350,000 nationals² have played an integral role in the UAE's prosperity, contributing through entrepreneurial ventures and skilled expertise while further enriching the country's vibrant cultural tapestry.

The Boeing 777-200LR aircraft operating to and from Damascus features 38 Business Class seats alongside 264 seats in Economy Class. Emirates Business Class on the Damascus service will feature a 2-2-2 configuration. Travellers flying to and from Damascus with Emirates can enjoy the best experience in the sky with an unmatched culinary experience, including Levantine inspired dishes complemented by a wide selection of premium beverages. Customers can also sit back and relax with up to 6,500 channels of carefully curated entertainment, including close to 650 channels of Arabic content, including movies, TV shows, music, podcasts, games, audiobooks and more with ice, Emirates' award-winning inflight entertainment system.

Emirates commenced services to Damascus in 1988, and prior to suspending operations in 2012 the airline carried over 2.1 million passengers in and out of Syria.

The airline currently flies to 13 cities in the Middle East/GCC, serving the region with a total of 191 weekly flights.

THAI celebrates 65th Anniversary and unveils "THE NEW WORLDS OF TOMORROW"

TTA BULLETIN

Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (THAI) celebrated its 65th Anniversary with "THE NEW WORLDS OF TOMORROW" - a special event held recently at World Ballroom, Centara Grand at Centralworld, to officially launch its new tagline "GRACE TO GROWTH," which reflects the commitment to enhance passenger experience in all dimensions while delivering a distinctive Thai touch after the accomplishment in the Rehabilitation process. By providing high-quality aviation technology, THAI not only serves passengers but also elevates its competency within the aviation industry where THAI stock is scheduled to resume trading in the Stock Exchange of Thailand this July.

Tourism Authority of Thailand Governor Thapanee Kiatphaibool, Mr. Piyasvasti Amranand, THAI Chairman of the Plan Administrators, Mr. Chansin Treenuchagron, THAI Plan Administrator, Mr. Chaff Eamsiri, THAI Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Korakot Chatasingha, THAI Chief Commercial Officer, and THAI senior management elaborated THAI future to business partners, distinguished guests, and the members of the press in this event.

"For the past 65 years, THAI remains the carrier of choice among passengers around the world. Now, it is ready to leap forward. With THE NEW WORLDS concept, THAI is prepared to serve current travel needs with seamless travel experience of passengers as its top priority," Mr. Amranand said.

In order to provide an unforgettable inflight experience, THAI introduces the following services including re-introducing "Sawasdee" the inflight magazine through various platforms for readers' convenience, collaborating with SIRIVANNAVARI, the luxury fashion brand established by Her Royal Highness Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana Rajakanya, in introducing two new designs of special amenities kit. The amenities kit includes rose-scented hand cream, SIRIVANNAVARI Maison lip balm, deodorant spray, blindfolds in the pouch pattern, a bamboo toothbrush, MARVIS toothpaste, and earplugs. These special amenities kit pouches by SIRIVANNAVARI, offering absolute "Smooth as Silk" travel essentials, are available in Royal Silk Class on flights to four fashion destinations: Milan, Paris, Tokyo, and Shanghai, starting May 1, 2025. THAI also launched the "Good Taste for a Good Cause" culinary campaign in serving passengers with locally produced high-quality ingredients to the global stage in alignment with the Thai government's Soft Power policy such as Look Jub TG, mung bean delicacy with a twist of authentic Thai fruit flavor, THAI rice cracker, as well as chocolate from KanVela craft chocolate, Doi Tung Coffee, and desserts from After You Dessert Café.

Another culinary campaign "Streets to Sky" brought Thai street food from renowned restaurants into the flight: Shrimp Pad Thai from Thipsamai restaurant, stir-fried noodles with seafood and

A Toast to Tea: Emirates and Dilmah celebrate 33 years together and 33 million cups of tea served

TTA BULLETIN

Celebrating International Tea Day on 21 May, Emirates and Dilmah Tea will be presenting a complimentary pack of luxury leaf artisan teas to customers on all flights, commemorating a successful 33-year partnership, and more than 33 million cups of tea served every year. Emirates Lounges across the world will also offer crafted Dilmah tea cocktails and mocktails, as well as traditional hot teas paired with sweet treats.

On International Tea Day, customers in all classes on flights over 2.5 hours will receive the special edition giftbox inflight, containing a trio of Dilmah's most celebrated teas; the Emirates Signature Tea - Dombagastalawa FBOP1 scented with Rose, Almond and Ginger which is ideal for celebrations, Moroccan Mint Green Tea which enhances peace of mind, and Ceylon Tea with Strawberry that represents a sense of joy.

Across all Emirates Lounges worldwide on 21 May, First and Business Class customers will be able to sample cocktails and mocktails crafted with Dilmah tea and expertly paired with delicious desserts. In the Dubai lounges, an exclusive Dilmah Elixir mocktail and cocktail will be paired with a fragrant coconut vanilla cake, lemon cake and moreish apple tart. From 15 to 31 May on flights from Dubai to the UK, Emirates' cabin crew will offer Dilmah tea pairing tips for the Afternoon Tea service in First and Business Class.



Emirates brews more than 33 million cups of tea annually for customers inflight, as well as serving a range of teas in Emirates' airport lounges worldwide. In First Class, Emirates offers a selection of 6 Dilmah gourmet blends; from the energy boosting Original Earl Grey, to a mellow Pure Chamomile Flowers, healthy and antioxidant Sencha Green Extra Special, to intense and majestic Brilliant Breakfast, the most popular option in First Class - Moroccan Mint Green Tea, as well as Emirates' Signature Tea - Dombagastalawa Estate Ceylon FBOP1 grade, with safflower, marigold flowers, rose, ginger and almond.

In Business Class, Emirates offers 5 luxury leaf teas, Earl Grey - a deliciously fragrant gourmet tea with natural bergamot, as well as Ceylon tea, Pure Camomile Flowers, Green Tea Natural and Green Tea Moroccan Mint. In Premium Economy and Economy Class, customers can savour a choice of Ceylon or Natural Green Tea.

Emirates Cabin Crew receive a dedicated tea training to discover the sustainable origins of Dilmah tea, experience the unique flavours, learn to brew the perfect cup, and further enhance flavour with an array of accoutrements including fresh mint, honey and lemon. Cabin crew also learn about tea and food pairing, where key recommendations for customers can include pairing seafood, soft cheeses and sushi with green tea, matching beef, game, sweet desserts or hard cheeses with black

Cathay Pacific celebrates Sri Lanka's top travel partners

TTA BULLETIN

Cathay Pacific recently hosted an exclusive networking evening at the elegant ITC Ratnadipa to honour their top agency partners from Sri Lanka. This special gathering recognised the unwavering support of their top fifteen contributing travel agency partners and provided a platform to connect with key members of Cathay Pacific's Regional Commercial team.

In attendance were Cathay's Anand Yedery, Regional Head of Customer Travel & Lifestyle for South Asia, Middle East, and Africa (SAMEA), Naveed Ahmed Khan, Regional Head of Business Insights and Analytics, and Talha Shaikh, Regional Head of Trade Sales for India and Sri Lanka—both of whom flew in especially for the event—along with the newly appointed Country Lead, Gayathri Weeras-

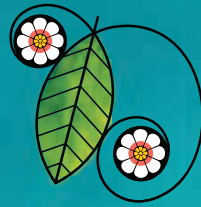
inghe.

The evening served as a meaningful moment of connection between the airlines valued trade partners and Cathay's leadership team. Each agency was personally acknowledged and appreciated for their outstanding contribution and ongoing support since the resumption of flights from Colombo to Hong Kong in February

2024.

The airline also spotlighted key route developments, including the popular Colombo to Hong Kong and beyond connections. Agency partners were thrilled to learn about the increased frequency from Colombo to Hong Kong, marking another exciting milestone in a continued growth journey.





Thema

COLLECTION



Aliya
SIGIRIYA



Amba Yaalu
KANDALAMA



Mountbatten
KANDY



Scottish Planter
NUWARA ELIYA



Tea & Experience
MANDARAM NUWARA



Waraka
UDAWALAWA



Wild Glamping
GAL OYA



Wild Glamping
KNUCKLES



Kithala
TISSA-YALA



Maalu Maalu
PASIKUDA



Parangi
WELIGAMA



Vista Vie
MIRISSA



Ayurvie
SIGIRIYA



Ayurvie
WELIGAMA



Thema Collection invites you to explore 14 unique properties across Sri Lanka, where each property tells its own story of heritage and nature. Experience authentic moments deeply rooted in local communities, offering sustainable adventures that connect you with the heart of the island's beauty and traditions. Discover the essence of Sri Lanka through unforgettable stays that blend culture, nature, and conscious living.

Different Themes, Authentic Experiences

