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WTM London 2025 set to be the largest in event's 45-year history

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA



WTM London 2025 is on track to become the largest and most influential edition in its 45-year history, driven by surging global demand in travel and the continued expansion of Excel London. Set for Tuesday 4 – Thursday 6 November, the event builds on 2024's success, which saw an 11% rise in qualified buyers and 34,000+ pre-scheduled meetings taking place.

The 2024 launch of the Capital Hall and Auditorium level at Excel London, marked a major capacity boost, welcoming more exhibitors and elevating the visitor experience. Now, with an additional 25,000 m² being introduced in 2025—a 25% expansion of Excel, WTM London 2025 is poised to grow once more, with increased space, enhanced content, and deeper high-level engagement.

The expansion allows WTM London to introduce WTM Trend Fest – a brand-new cultural programme spotlighting immersive global experiences from across the globe. Expanding on the events commitment to leading travel trends, WTM Trend Fest offers exhibitors the chance to showcase activations on a new cultural stage. With themes spanning wellness, pop culture, gastronomy, sport, and adventure, opportunities include live performances, sponsorship, themed activations, and daily presentations.

Over 4,000 exhibitors took part in WTM London 2024—an 8% increase on 2023—spanning everything from destinations and experiences to transport, accommodation

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Sri Lanka To Host South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) 2025 At Cinnamon Grand Colombo

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA



The South Asian Travel Awards (SATA), the region's most esteemed platform recognizing excellence in travel, tourism, and hospitality, proudly announces this year's edition to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA). This will be the 9th edition of SATA, which will take place from 19th to 20th September 2025 at Cinnamon Grand Colombo, serving as the Official Host of the event. The success of SATA 2025 is made possible through the invaluable support of its distinguished partners. Honda Marine joins as the Platinum Partner, while The Hawks Pvt Ltd, Velana International Airport (VIA) and Allied Insurance Company of the Maldives serve as Gold Partners. Bizspoke and Renaatus join as Silver Partners.

Since its inception, SATA has remained dedicated to celebrating innovation, service excellence, and the evolving spirit of South Asia's tourism industry. With participation from leading stakeholders across India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh, SATA 2025 is going to be a landmark gathering that further strengthens regional collaboration and honors the industry's top performers.

SATA continues to be a promoter for growth, innovation, and cross-border collaboration within the tourism industry. SATA 2025 edition will not only honor outstanding contributions but also serve as a strategic platform for thought leadership, networking, and regional unity. As the host nation, Sri Lanka will showcase its unmatched hospitality, resilience,

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Uga Halloowella Named Among the World's Most Unreal Destination Hotels by Qantas Travel Insider

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Uga Halloowella, the luxury tea country retreat by Uga, has been recognised by Qantas Travel Insider in its latest round-up of the "15 of the World's Most Unreal Destination Hotels."

Travel Insider is the official travel content platform of Australia's flagship carrier, Qantas, reaching a unique monthly audience of over 285,000 readers and generating 3.5 million page views per month. This recognition places Uga Halloowella firmly on the global map as one of the most exceptional hotel experiences available to international travellers.

Set high in the misty mountains of Hatton, at an elevation of 1,444 metres above sea level, Uga Halloowella offers an enchanting escape within a restored colonial bungalow designed to resemble a grand treehouse. Guests are treated to sweeping views of the Castlereagh Reservoir, a private infinity pool, and the lush tea plantations that surround the property. Inside, every indulgence awaits — from dedicated butler service to a state-of-the-art jacuzzi, spa treatments, and the warmth of Sri Lankan hospitality — all within a newly completed refurbishment.

This international recognition further enhances Sri Lanka's positioning as a luxury travel destination, highlighting Uga Halloowella as a must-visit retreat for discerning travellers seeking exclusivity, authenticity, and five-star comfort in the island's tea country.

Part of the Uga luxury hospitality collection, Uga Halloowella is a boutique five-star retreat located in Hatton, Sri Lanka. It blends heritage charm with modern luxuries, offering a curated experience in one of the island's most picturesque landscapes.



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WTM London 2025....

and tech solutions. Early indicators suggest record-breaking growth for 2025. Continuing to elevate the exhibitor experience, WTM London will debut its live TV channel next year, WTM TV, designed to educate, engage, and connect audiences. With guaranteed visibility across the venue and online, WTM TV offers partners and attendees with a new level of insight and access to the show.

The event's influence continues to expand at the policy level, drawing over 50 Tourism Ministers in 2024—a 12% increase from the previous year. The 2025 Ministers' Summit at WTM, held in association with UN Tourism and the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), will showcase its most impactful lineup to date. Organisers are already forecasting even greater participation in 2025.

The show this year will be led by newly appointed Event Director, Chris Carter-Chapman, who brings strong ambitions to work with industry partners and attendees to help further cement WTM London's position as the most influential travel event in the world.

Chris comments: "Although we're still early in the planning and promotion cycle, all indicators suggest WTM London 2025 will be a landmark edition—already tracking significantly ahead of 2024. With the next phase of Excel London's expansion underway, we're unlocking unprecedented opportunities for exhibitors, content, and visitor experiences at a scale never seen before."

"Our partnership with Excel London is central to WTM London's ability to grow and innovate. Together, we're creating a dynamic platform that reinforces the Capital's status as the epicentre of global travel and tourism dialogue."

"WTM London is proud of its legacy — but we're firmly focused on the future," Chris concluded. "We're evolving faster than ever before to meet the expectations of a global audience, and 2025 will set a bold new benchmark for what this event can deliver."

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Sri Lanka To Host South Asian....

and commitment to tourism development on a global stage.

Regional hospitality is elevated by a network of Hospitality Partners including Mandarin Colombo (Sri Lanka), Sheraton Grande Bangalore at Brigade Gateway (India), Andaz Delhi (India), Hulhule Island Hotel (Maldives), Holiday Inn Express Kathmandu Naxal (Nepal), Zhiwaling Heritage in Paro (Bhutan), and Holiday Inn Dhaka City Centre (Bangladesh). SATA 2025 is proudly endorsed by key tourism bodies and associations across South Asia, including Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB),

Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Visit Maldives Corporation Limited, and major national travel associations such as TAAI – Travel Agents Association of India including other leading Industry stakeholders, travel and hospitality partners in the Maldives, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka.

Further amplifying the reach of the event, SATA 2025 is supported by an extensive Media network across the region. This strategic collaboration ensures widespread engagement and visibility across the region's key tourism markets.

Classic Destinations Honoured as Best DMC out of India at the ICONIC Tourism Summit

TTA BULLETIN

Classic Destinations, one of Sri Lanka's leading destination management companies, was awarded Best DMC out of India at the prestigious ICONIC Tourism Summit & Awards 2025, held at ITC Maurya, New Delhi.

The ICONIC Tourism Summit, organized by Redhat Communications in collaboration with TV9 Network, brought together policymakers, diplomats, industry leaders, innovators, and cultural ambassadors for a full day of dialogue and recognition of excellence within the tourism sector. The event culminated in the ICONIC Awards 2025, graced by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister of Culture, Government of India, as Chief Guest.

The awards ceremony recognized outstanding contributions to the tourism industry, with Classic Destinations standing out among international players for its innovative approach, service excellence, and strong partnerships across India.

Reflecting on the recognition, Chalaka Gajabahu, Head of Classic Destinations, said: "India has always been a pivotal market for us, not just as a source of travellers to Sri Lanka but also as a partner in creating multi-destination experiences across the region. Being recognized as the Best DMC out of India at such a prestigious forum is a true honour and a testament to the dedication of our team in delivering world-class travel experiences."



Adding his thoughts, Sabry Bahaudeen, Chief Commercial Officer, Expolanka Leisure, noted: "This award reflects the long-standing trust and collaboration we have built with our partners in India. Classic Destinations has consistently elevated Sri Lanka's profile within the region, and this recognition further strengthens our commitment to positioning Sri Lanka as a leading destination for discerning travellers."

The summit also featured a high-profile panel discussion with leaders such as Amitabh Kant, Former CEO of NITI Aayog & G20 Sherpa, Jyotsna Suri, Chairman & MD, Lalit Hospitality Group, Suman Billa, Additional Secretary & Director General, Ministry of Tourism, and other industry influencers.

This award marks yet another milestone in Classic Destinations' journey, during which the company has become synonymous with personalized service, unique itineraries, and an unwavering focus on showcasing the best of Sri Lanka and South Asia to global travellers.

Sri Lanka's tourism sector continues to chart a steady course despite the natural fluctuations in monthly arrival numbers. While August saw a dip compared to previous months, year-on-year growth remains positive, underscoring the industry's resilience and recovery trajectory. Stakeholders remain confident that the country is well-positioned to meet its annual targets, driven by renewed demand and a stronger focus on strategic source markets.

Aviation has always been the lifeline of tourism, and in this context, the recently concluded Aviation Summit organized by Aviation Voice was both timely and impactful. The event brought together leaders from government and the private sector to discuss pressing challenges, policy alignment, and the path forward for Sri Lanka's aviation industry. Key themes included the importance of increasing connectivity, modernizing infrastructure, and creating a collaborative framework that supports both airlines and the tourism ecosystem. The positive energy and outcomes of the summit reflect a shared commitment to ensure that aviation continues to fuel tourism growth.

This month also marks important milestones within Sri Lanka's business and tourism landscape. George Steuart & Co. proudly celebrated its 190th anniversary, reaffirming its role not only as one of the country's oldest companies but also as a dynamic contributor to national economic growth across multiple sectors. Their longevity is a testament to vision, adaptability, and an enduring commitment to Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, the Connaissance Group, a pioneering force in hospitality, celebrated 50 years in tourism. Their journey reflects the evolution of Sri Lanka as a destination—from its early days to becoming a sought-after travel experience today. The group's contributions to promoting Sri Lankan culture, wellness, and hospitality have left a lasting mark on the industry.

These achievements remind us that while challenges remain, Sri Lanka's tourism and allied industries are built on strong foundations—ready to seize opportunities and deliver growth.



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The Leela Hyderabad General Manager Inspires Students at IHM Hyderabad with Industry Insights

TTA BULLETIN

Mr. Rajesh Gopalakrishnan, General Manager of The Leela Hyderabad, addressed students at the Institute of Hotel Management, Hyderabad, offering insights on leadership, career growth, and the unique opportunities the hospitality industry creates for young professionals.

In his address, Mr. Gopalakrishnan highlighted the value of developing leadership, collaboration, technological adaptability, and customer-centric thinking to succeed in the industry. He urged students to remain patient with their career journeys, start where opportunities arise, and stay committed for long-term success.

Drawing an evocative comparison, he said, “If you want to fly supersonic jets, you join the Air Force because only Air Force can give you the experience and it thrives on young energy and boldness. Hospitality is no different. This industry is our version of flying supersonic jets - fast, demanding, exhilarating, and unmatched in the experiences it creates. And just like the Air Force, it calls for young talent to rise to the challenge.”

His words struck a chord with students, positioning hospitality not merely as a job, but as a high-energy adventure that rewards resilience, creativity, and passion for people.

The talk ended with an engaging interaction where Mr. Gopalakrishnan emphasized that true hospitality blends timeless values with innovation, and that the future of the industry rests on the shoulders of adaptable, committed, and curious young professionals.

A very young Indian hospitality firm, Pioneer Holiday Resorts Limited primarily develops high-end hotel projects. The company is boldly entering the high-end hospitality industry with the goal of building world-class hotels and giving guests unforgettable experiences. The Leela Hyderabad is the group's flagship property and is the benchmark for all future luxury developments in the portfolio.

The Leela Hyderabad, a 156-room luxury address sprawled across 2.5 acres, features design and experiences inspired by the regal city and Deccan history. The hotel is in the famed Banjara Hills neighbourhood. Every restaurant at the hotel has a unique tale, ranging from hyperlocal Deccan to creative Asian to Continental cuisines, all of which explore eating and ancestral experiences. Nila, the hotel's wellness centre, is accessed by a walk-through bridge and houses a spa, gym, salon, and pool.

The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts is India's only institutionally owned and managed pure-play luxury hospitality company. The Leela owns, operates, manages, and develops luxury hotels and resorts under, “The Leela” brand which was ranked as #1 among the world's best hospitality brands in 2020 and 2021, and among the world's top three hospitality brands in 2023 and 2024, by Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards Surveys. The company operates twelve properties across key Indian business and leisure destinations, celebrating each hotel through its location, art, culture, and cuisine with bespoke services, celebratory rituals, and immersive experiences. Promoted by private equity funds managed and/or advised by affiliates of Brookfield Asset Management Ltd., The Leela is committed to providing guests luxury experiences with premier accommodation, exclusivity, and personalized service, inspired by the ethos of Indian hospitality. For more information, please visit our website www.theleela.com and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Sarawak Tourism Board to Showcase Rich Cultural Heritage at CelebrASIA 2025 – A Southeast Asian Celebration at London's Battersea Power Station

TTA BULLETIN

Sarawak Tourism Board (STB) is pleased to announce its debut participation in CelebrASIA 2025, the popular consumer show returning for its second year from 5th to 7th September 2025 at Battersea Power Station, London.

Following the tremendous success of the inaugural event in 2024, which drew over 154,000 attendees across three days, CelebrASIA has established itself as a flagship event in the UK for cultural exchange and tourism promotion. Supported by embassies and community groups, the festival showcases ten Southeast Asian countries, including Malaysia, with Sarawak taking an important role in this year's programme.

Set to return even bigger in 2025, the three-day event will once again transform one of London's most iconic venues into a vibrant celebration of Southeast Asian food, culture, and community. This year there will be an expanded programme including a new riverside Feasting Tent, a curated artisan market of over 30 Southeast Asian brands, and interactive arts and craft sessions for all ages.

As part of Malaysia's national presence, Sarawak will play a prominent role, showcasing its unique traditions, creative industries, and authentic visitor experiences through a range of engaging activations.

“The UK is important for us,” said Sharzede Datu Haji Salleh Askor, Chief Executive Officer of Sarawak Tourism Board. “CelebrASIA offers an exceptional opportunity to engage directly with UK-based travellers, trade professionals, and the wider community. We are proud to present the diverse cultural expressions and indigenous craftsmanship of Sarawak, and to reinforce its position as one of Malaysia's most compelling and authentic destinations.”

Sarawak Tourism Board is pleased to partner with Tourism Malaysia to showcase the country's appeal as a leading and diverse travel destination. During CelebrASIA 2025, STB will spotlight Sarawak's rich eco-tourism, vibrant cultural heritage, and immersive travel experiences.

Sarawak Craft Council will also have a booth, showcasing and selling traditional Sarawak crafts, including intricate beadwork and handwoven basketry.

Enhancing the visitor experience further, Sarawak Tourism Board is proud to present two hands-on craft workshops, offering festivalgoers the opportunity to explore and participate in traditional Sarawakian art forms.

Led by “Pungu Borneo” this workshop invites participants to discover the intricate beauty of Marek Empang – a type of adornment traditionally worn by Iban maidens during dances and ceremonial occasions. Made from thousands of colourful threads and beads, each piece tells a story of heritage and identity. In this session, guests will learn how to craft a single-string Marek Empang while gaining insight into its cultural significance and symbolism. Taking place 6th September at 10:00am, and 7th September at 14:15pm.

Guided by the skilled artisans of “Kunang Studio”, this workshop is a creative and reflective introduction to Sarawak's rich weaving traditions. Participants will be taught basic weaving techniques using locally sourced natural fibres such as rattan and

bemban – materials traditionally used by Sarawak's indigenous communities. This immersive workshop highlights both the skill and meaning embedded in this heritage art form. Taking place 6th September at 11:30am, and 7th September at 11:45am.

Both workshops will take place in the Turbine Halls, Level 1, and are priced at £35 per person. Each session lasts one hour and is limited to 20 participants. Places must be booked in advance via the event organiser's website.

In addition to the workshops, a six-member performance troupe from the Sarawak Arts Council will present a captivating programme of traditional dance performances on the festival's outdoor stage. These live cultural showcases will run from Friday afternoon through to Sunday evening, offering audiences a vibrant glimpse into Sarawak's rich artistic heritage. Performance schedule to be confirmed.

With a vibrant programme featuring live music, food from over 29 top Southeast Asian chefs, and an expanded cultural showcase marking Wandsworth's year as London Borough of Culture, CelebrASIA 2025 promises something for everyone. A highlight for families is the Grand Tour Trail, where children can explore Southeast Asian cultures, collect stamps in a celebrASIA passport, and earn a special explorer sticker upon completion – a fun and educational way to experience the festival together.

Sarawak's participation reflects its continued commitment to cultural diplomacy and destination marketing, connecting with a key international market and inviting UK travellers to explore its living traditions, biodiversity, and heritage.

A kaleidoscope of culture, adventure, nature, food and festivals: is the best description for Sarawak. Sarawak comprises 34 ethnic tribes with their own unique traditions, lifestyles, music and food, while sharing their warm hospitality. Malaysia's largest state, Sarawak, endowed with some of the oldest rainforests on Earth. Its vast landscape spans over 120,000 sq kms, with towering mountains and cool highlands, jagged limestone formations and mysterious cave systems, winding rivers and quiet beaches; where adventures are waiting to happen. Festivals are hosted throughout the year celebrate the eclectic blend of modern and traditional culture, food, music and religious practices that can be found nowhere else. In Sarawak, there is always ‘More to Discover’.

Sarawak Tourism Board is the key promoter for Sarawak. STB is a winner of the Asia Pacific Excellence Awards 2016 by Asia-Pacific Association of Communications Directors (APACD) and has received the ASEAN PR Excellence Award 2015 Gold Award. The Rainforest World Music Festival is a five-time Top 25 Best International Festivals recognised by Songlines World Music Magazine (2011 – 2015). Meanwhile, the Rainforest World Music Festival and Borneo Jazz Festival Virtual Experiences were recognised by World Responsible Tourism Awards 2021 as ‘Ones to Watch’ under Destinations Building Back Better Post-Covid and the virtual experience of the 2021 Rainforest World Music Festival won the PATA Gold Awards 2022 under Sustainability and Social Responsibility Category for Culture. Sarawak Tourism Board also won the Golden City Gate 2019 five-star award, Marketing Excellence Awards 2021 for Excellence in Mobile Marketing (bronze) and PATA Gold



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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



ICCA Middle East Summit 2025 to Be Held in the Kingdom of Bahrain for the First Time in September

TTA BULLETIN

Exhibition World Bahrain is hosting the ICCA Middle East Summit 2025 on 1-2 September, bringing together key regional and international stakeholders from meetings and events industry.



Organised in partnership with the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), the summit will be held in Bahrain for the first time, reinforcing the Kingdom's strategic position as a growing centre for business events in the area.

The forum will feature a focused agenda of panel discussions, case studies, workshops, and structured networking, targeting critical topics shaping the global MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) landscape. The summit will also introduce the ICCA Middle East Recognition Awards, aimed at acknowledging institutional excellence and innovation within the region's business events sector.

Her Excellency Sara Ahmed Buhiji, CEO of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) and Chairperson of

Exhibition World Bahrain stated: "Hosting this regional summit is aligned with Exhibition World Bahrain's broader efforts to cement Bahrain's positioning as a

destination for global business and knowledge exchange. Exhibition World Bahrain is an important national asset in achieving these objectives, and we look forward to welcoming stakeholders who are shaping the future of the MICE sector across the region."

"ICCA is excited to head to Bahrain for the next iteration of the Middle East Summit," said Dr. Senthil Gopinath, CEO of ICCA. "Bahrain presents a compelling value proposition for the global meetings industry, with its infrastructure, government support, and strategic clarity. We are looking forward to leading the charge in innovation and high-tech developments, particularly in how artificial intelligence is transforming destination marketing and the way cities position themselves globally. This Summit will provide participants with valuable insights and unmatched opportunities for networking."

ITB Asia 2025 Conference Unites Leaders to Redefine Tourism

TTA BULLETIN

Organised by Messe Berlin Asia Pacific, the ITB Asia 2025 Conference will deliver three days of curated content across three specialised stages - the Knowledge Theatre, MICE Show Asia Theatre, and Travel Tech Asia Theatre - exploring how the travel and tourism industry can build a more agile, inclusive future and equip itself for what lies ahead.

"In times of rapid change, ITB Asia serves as an important platform for the global travel community to exchange ideas, gain fresh perspectives, and develop strategies for the future. "Future Forward" highlights our focus on harnessing technology, advancing sustainability, and reimagining

the traveller experience to turn challenges into opportunities," said Darren Seah, Executive Director, Messe Berlin Asia Pacific, the organiser of ITB Asia.

The event will open with Michael Shoory, Head of APAC Tourism Analysis at Tourism Economics, who will present an in-depth outlook on travel to and within the APAC region, highlighting changes in traveller source markets, the future of business and MICE travel, and the economic forces shaping demand. He will be followed by Nick Lim, CEO (Asia) of The Travel Corporation, who will share forward-looking perspectives on how



Arabian Travel Market 2026 theme to focus on the future of global travel

TTA BULLETIN

Arabian Travel Market (ATM) has officially announced the theme for the 2026 edition of the leading international travel and tourism event in the Middle East, where the crossroads of East meets West: "Travel 2040: Driving New Frontiers Through Innovation and Technology."



Taking place from 4-7 May 2026 at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), ATM 2026 will explore the forces reshaping the global tourism landscape and highlight how innovation is transforming every stage of the traveller's journey.

The period leading up to 2040 is expected to be one of the most transformative eras in the history of global tourism, with research from the World Economic Forum highlighting that the travel and tourism sector is projected to serve 30 billion tourist visits and contribute \$16 trillion to global GDP by 2034. In parallel, technological advancements, including AI-driven personalisation and immersive digital experiences, alongside green aviation and smart mobility, are set to redefine how, where, and why people travel.

Against this backdrop, ATM 2026 will provide a vital platform for the global travel community to explore new opportunities, accelerate technological adoption, and build a more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive industry for the future.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said: "The next ten years and beyond are going to be crucial for the travel and tourism industry. We are at a significant turning point where factors such as climate change, digital advancements, and evolving consumer expectations are all coming together to create both challenges and opportunities. By showcasing how innovation can enhance the travel experience, improve operational efficiency, and promote sustainability, ATM 2026 will provide an important platform for the global industry to prepare for what lies ahead, while ensuring the Middle East remains at the forefront of this evolution."

ATM's emphasis on innovation is also underpinned by market momentum. According to the ATM Travel Trends Report 2025, travel spend in the Middle East is expected to surpass US\$350 billion by 2030, with inbound travel projected to grow at nearly double the global average. Demand for business events (MICE), luxury experiences, and transformative journeys is surging across the region, positioning the Middle East as a dynamic hub for the future of global tourism.

Building on this growth, ATM 2026 will feature several dedicated show verticals, each designed to deepen engagement within key sectors driving the future of travel.

ATM Travel Tech will make its debut as a fully co-located show at ATM 2026.

Evolving from its previous role as a fast-growing sector on the show floor, it will now take place within dedicated halls directly linked to ATM during the same dates, reflecting the accelerating convergence of technology and tourism. The show will highlight how breakthrough innovations, from AI-powered trip planning and immersive experiences to smart payments, fintech, mobility, big data, and cybersecurity, are transforming the travel ecosystem.

The Tech & Innovation Zone will form the core of ATM Travel Tech, featuring an 850 sqm immersive space showcasing robotics, AR/VR, next-generation payments, and green technology solutions, anchored by the Future Stage, a 250-seat theatre hosting futurists, entrepreneurs, and global tech leaders.

IBTM @ ATM, which returns in 2026 following a successful launch during last year's event, will connect the global business events (MICE) community with the Middle East's rapidly expanding meetings and mega-events sector, bringing association planners, conference organisers, and corporate buyers together with leading destination convention bureaus, venues and business event suppliers.

Meanwhile, the ATM Ultra Luxury Lounge will create an exclusive environment for high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth individuals to connect with world-class luxury brands, spanning hospitality, private aviation, yachting, and bespoke travel experiences.

"Our show verticals have become vital in showcasing the changing structure of the global travel and tourism industry. By focusing alongside its core leisure travel focus, ATM 2026 ensures that we highlight areas where innovation and investment have the greatest influence. Each vertical offers a carefully curated environment where stakeholders can engage more deeply, form meaningful partnerships, and collectively shape the industry's future to 2040," added Curtis.

As global tourism evolves towards innovation, sustainability, and purposeful growth, ATM 2026 will convene industry leaders, policymakers, and innovators to showcase pioneering solutions and share insights that will drive the sector forward. With over 55,000 industry professionals from 166 countries having attended the 2025 edition, ATM continues to expand its role as a catalyst for global collaboration and a launchpad for the ideas and technologies transforming travel.

How AI is Transforming Guest Communication for Asia-Pacific Hotels

TTA BULLETIN

Across Asia-Pacific's hotel industry, from luxury resorts in the Maldives to boutique properties in Sri Lanka, hoteliers face a common challenge: meeting guests' expectations for instant communication.

Whether your guests message via WhatsApp, website chat, or Messenger, they expect quick, personal responses, day or night, busy season or not. For many regional properties, keeping up with these demands while managing daily operations can be tough.

Profitroom: Your Technology Partner for Hotel Success

Profitroom is a leading hotel technology company serving properties across Europe, Africa, Middle East and Asia-Pacific. With clients across Thailand, Philippines, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, we help hotels maximize revenue through innovative booking and optimization solutions.

Our latest innovation, AI Agent, builds on years of understanding APAC hospitality needs, delivering 24/7 intelligent guest support while preserving the warm, personal service that defines exceptional hospitality.

Understanding APAC Communication Needs

With travelers from different cultures and digital habits, Asia-Pacific hotels face unique communication challenges. Guests from different regions prefer different platforms, some use WhatsApp, others prefer website chat, while many expect WeChat support.

Hotels face several challenges:

- Multiple languages needed for international guests
- 24/7 service across different time zones
- Cultural differences in communication styles
- Limited staff resources especially for smaller properties
- Busy seasons requiring extra communication support

For many hotels in Sri Lanka and across the region, these demands can stretch resources thin, potentially impacting guest satisfaction and efficiency.

How AI Agent Works: Your Smart Solution

Profitroom's AI Agent changes how hotels communicate with guests by giving instant, smart responses across all major channels. Built specifically for hotels, this AI solution handles everything from basic questions to complex booking requests.

Key features include:

Instant Multi-Channel Support – Responds immediately via website chat, WhatsApp, and Messenger, so no guest question goes unanswered.

Smart Conversation Handling – Processes thousands of messages monthly while keeping natural, helpful conversations that feel human.

Native Booking Integration – Connects directly with your booking engine for real-time availability, pricing, and offers, ensuring accurate responses that drive direct bookings.

Advanced Language Processing – Provides consistent support across multiple languages using cutting-edge natural language technology.

Success Story: A Hotel's Digital Change

A boutique thermal spa resort recently worked with Profitroom to implement AI Agent technology. Within 30 days, the results were impressive:

- 923 guest conversations managed smoothly
- 3,068 individual messages handled without staff help
- 69 hours of valuable staff time freed up for personalized guest services
- Over 2 hours saved daily, allowing the team to focus on creating great experiences

The AI Agent successfully handled the most common guest questions: availability checks, amenity information, dining reservations, and spa bookings, while keeping the warm, welcoming tone that guests expect from regional hospitality.

Supporting Asian Hospitality Values

Rather than replacing human interaction, AI Agent amplifies your team's capabilities. While the AI manages routine inquiries like availability and amenities, your staff focuses on creating memorable experiences that build guest loyalty.

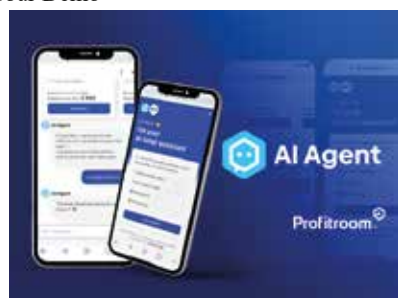
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INSPIRING JOURNEYS

HISHAN SINGHAWANSA ON LEADING CINNAMON HOTELS & RESORTS INTO THE FUTURE

"CINNAMON LIFE IS MORE THAN A LANDMARK PROJECT IT IS ABOUT ESTABLISHING COLOMBO AS A REGIONAL MICE POWERHOUSE."



When asked about his vision for Sri Lanka's hospitality industry, Hishan Singhawansa doesn't hesitate: "Sri Lanka has the assets to be one of the most desired destinations in the world. What we need now is scale, innovation, and consistency."

Singhawansa, who has been with the John Keells Group (JKH) for 17 years, recently took on the role of Chief Executive Officer at Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts at a defining moment for both the company and the country. With tourism rebounding beyond pre-pandemic levels, his mandate is clear – strengthen Cinnamon's role as one of the largest contributors to Sri Lanka's tourism sector while positioning the island as a truly global destination.

"Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is at the forefront of showcasing this potential," he explains. "Our properties blend luxury, lifestyle, and authenticity, appealing to travellers from all corners of the globe. By harnessing technology and innovation, we're creating seamless and personalised guest experiences, with sustainability and inclusivity at the heart of our growth."

That philosophy extends beyond Sri Lanka. Cinnamon's resorts in the Maldives embody the same vision, championing international standards, sustainability, and experiential travel.

One of the boldest expressions of this ambition is Cinnamon Life, a landmark US\$1.2 billion integrated resort in Colombo and the largest development of its kind in South Asia. With 687 rooms, over 160,000 square feet of MICE facilities for up to 5,000 delegates, residences, retail, dining, and entertainment, Cinnamon Life is designed to transform Colombo into a regional MICE powerhouse alongside cities like Singapore, Bangkok, and Dubai – while creating 20,000 jobs in the process.

Yet for Singhawansa, infrastructure is only part of the story. "Tourism is about economic transformation and community empowerment," he says. Under his leadership, Cinnamon is investing in people and purpose. The Cinnamon Hospitality Academy is working to raise women's participation in hospitality to at least 24% by 2025, while initiatives such as EmpowHer focus on creating safer, more inclusive workplaces. Meanwhile, Cinnamon Nature Trails, the brand's wildlife and experiential tourism arm, continues to deliver conservation-led journeys that showcase Sri Lanka's natural heritage.

"Our priority is to become a catalyst for change – delivering world-class experiences while ensuring that tourism uplifts the communities we serve," he emphasises.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is also the only Sri Lankan brand to be part of the Global Hotel Alliance (GHA), giving it access to over 30 million members worldwide through the Cinnamon Discovery loyalty programme. Combined with a portfolio of 17 hotels and resorts across Sri Lanka and the Maldives, the group is uniquely positioned to drive the region's tourism recovery and growth.

As he looks ahead, Singhawansa sees Cinnamon's role as more than just operating hotels. It's about redefining the region's place on the global travel map. "This is about building a legacy for Sri Lanka and the Maldives – destinations where authenticity, innovation, and scale come together to inspire travellers and transform communities."

"OUR VISION IS TO BUILD A LEGACY FOR SRI LANKA AND THE MALDIVES, WHERE AUTHENTICITY, INNOVATION, AND SCALE COME TOGETHER TO INSPIRE TRAVELLERS AND TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES."

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

ACORN GROUP

MOVEMENTS

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts Appoints Hotelier Kamal Munasinghe

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts has appointed Kamal Munasinghe as its new Chief Operating Officer (COO), to lead operations across the brand's 17 resorts and hotels in Sri Lanka and the Maldives.



With nearly 30 years of experience across Asia and Europe, Kamal brings with him a vision that looks beyond traditional hospitality. His focus is on transforming Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts into a brand defined by precision in operations, authenticity in service, and innovation in guest journeys.

Having held senior leadership roles with global names prior to his leadership at Cinnamon Grand Colombo and the wider Colombo portfolio, he has consistently demonstrated the ability to blend efficiency with excellence, while keeping guests at the centre of the experience.

Looking ahead, his strategy positions operational excellence as the invisible engine that powers unforgettable stays. Streamlined processes, agile teams, and data driven insights will form the backbone of a guest journey that feels effortless, personalised, and uniquely Cinnamon. At the same time, he envisions the brand as a

stage for experiences that go beyond accommodation, moments that capture the soul of Sri Lanka and the Maldives while meeting the expectations of the world's most discerning travellers.

"Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts has all the right ingredients to stand among the leading hospitality brands of the region," said Kamal Munasinghe. "Our journey forward will be about perfecting the balance between consistency and creativity, efficiency and warmth, global standards and local character. By investing in our people, embracing innovation, and redefining what personalisation means for the modern traveller, we will create a guest experience that is seamless, memorable, and truly transformative."

His global career, with milestones in Switzerland, Malaysia, and Vietnam, has equipped him with the foresight to navigate a dynamic industry and the confidence to make bold decisions. A graduate of Schiller International University, Switzerland, he now sets his sights on steering Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts into a future where operational mastery and guest-centric innovation together elevate the brand's presence in South Asia and beyond.

Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas Welcomes Stuart De San Nicolas as General Manager,

TTA BULLETIN

Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas, the jewel of Thailand's last unspoiled island paradise, announces the appointment of Stuart De San Nicolas as General Manager. With a distinguished global career in ultra-luxury hospitality, Stuart brings not only deep operational expertise and transformative sales strategies, but also a proven track record of creating one-of-a-kind guest journeys for the world's most discerning travellers.



A global citizen by birth and the son of Spanish diplomats, Stuart has been immersed since childhood in the world of prestigious hotels, sparking a lifelong fascination with meaningful hospitality. He built his academic foundations in France, then over the next three decades redefined standards of bespoke service and commercial excellence for iconic brands such as St. Regis and Conrad across luxury destinations from Cannes to Bora Bora.

In 2023, Stuart joined Minor Hotels as Cluster General Manager, overseeing Anantara Kihavah Maldives Villas, the newly launched Avani+ Fares Maldives and the introduction of the NH and NH Collection brands in the Maldives. At Anantara Kihavah, consistently ranked among the world's top resorts, he oversaw signature experiences including underwater oenology and overwater astronomy, as

well as bespoke private journeys for ultra-high-net-worth individuals, all while steering best-in-class revenue generation and direct sales strategies.

Now taking the reins at Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas, Stuart brings his visionary leadership to Thailand's rising star in luxury travel, named one of TIME's World's Greatest Places of 2025. Nestled on a kilometre of private beach, the resort offers all-suite-and-pool-villa accommodation designed for privacy, connection and rare discovery. Signature experiences include vintage sidecar adventures, private yacht island hopping, and deeply curated wellness journeys all reflective of Stuart's philosophy: every guest is the story, and every moment the signature.

"Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort & Villas presents such an exciting opportunity for a hotelier, with an unrivalled setting on one of Thailand's most beautiful islands, superlative accommodations and facilities, and so much to experience in the waters that surround. I look forward to joining the team, who have already achieved so much, and working together to create even more unforgettable journeys for our guests," said Stuart De San Nicolas.

"Stuart has an innate ability to see luxury through both the guest's eyes and the brand's lens," said Dillip Rajakarier, Group

Hishan Singhawansa Appointed CEO of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, Outlines Vision for the Future

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, has appointed Mr. Hishan Singhawansa as its new Chief Executive Officer, unveiling the vision to strengthen the brand's role as one of the largest contributors to Sri Lanka's tourism sector and position the country's standing as a global destination. With 17 years at John Keells Group (JKH), Singhawansa takes on the role at a pivotal moment, as Sri Lanka's tourism rebounds beyond pre-pandemic levels.



among Singapore, Bangkok, and Dubai

Beyond infrastructure, Cinnamon is investing in fostering talent through the Cinnamon Hospitality Academy, aiming to increase women's participation in hospitality to at least 24% by 2025, and initiatives such as

EmpowHer, which create safer, more inclusive workplaces. Meanwhile, Cinnamon Nature Trails, the brand's wildlife and experiential tourism arm, continues to act as the country's destination experts, offering authentic, conservation-led journeys that align with global travel trends.

"Tourism is about economic transformation and community empowerment," added Singhawansa. "Our priority is to become a catalyst for change, delivering world-class experiences, and ensuring tourism uplifts the communities we serve."

"Sri Lanka has the assets to be one of the most desired destinations in the world. What we need now is scale, innovation, and consistency. Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is at the forefront of showcasing this potential, offering luxury, lifestyle, and authentic experiences that appeal to travellers globally. We harness technology and innovation to deliver seamless, personalised guest experiences, while ensuring sustainability and inclusivity remain at the heart of our growth," said Singhawansa. "Our resorts in the Maldives further embody this vision, championing international standards, sustainability, and experiential travel."

The chain's recently launched Cinnamon Life is a landmark US\$1.2 billion integrated resort in Colombo, and the largest development of its kind in South Asia. With 687 rooms, over 160,000 sq. ft. of MICE facilities for up to 5,000 guests, and a mix of residences, retail, dining, and entertainment, Cinnamon Life is expected to create 20,000 jobs and firmly establish Colombo as a regional MICE powerhouse

As the only Sri Lankan brand to be part of the Global Hotel Alliance (GHA), Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts connects with over 30 million members worldwide through its loyalty programme, Cinnamon Discovery. Combined with a portfolio of 17 hotels and resorts across Sri Lanka and the Maldives, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is uniquely positioned to play a central role in shaping Sri Lanka's tourism recovery and future growth bringing together authenticity, innovation, and scale to strengthen both Sri Lanka's and the Maldives' profile as leading global destinations.

ONYX Hospitality Group Appoints Monty Ariyaratne as General Manager of Amari Colombo

TTA BULLETIN

ONYX Hospitality Group proudly announces the appointment of Monty Ariyaratne as the General Manager of Amari Colombo, the brand's flagship property in Sri Lanka.



With over three decades of distinguished experience across leading international hospitality brands including Sheraton, Le Méridien, Accor, ONYX, and Radisson Hotel Group, Ariyaratne is a seasoned leader known for his results-driven approach and passion for people. Most recently, he served as General Manager for Radisson Hotels & Resorts in Galle and Kandy, where he successfully delivered record revenue growth while enhancing brand visibility in the region.

sible for steering Amari Colombo's operational and commercial strategies, elevating guest experiences, and positioning the hotel as a benchmark for modern hospitality in the heart of Colombo. He will report directly to Mr Sukamal Mondal, Vice President – Operations Support, ONYX Hospitality Group.

"Monty's proven leadership and deep understanding of the Sri Lankan hospitality landscape make him the ideal choice to lead Amari Colombo into its next phase of growth," said Sukamal Mondal. "We are delighted to welcome him back to the ONYX family and look forward to the energy and expertise he brings to the role."

In his new role, Ariyaratne will be respon-



Browns

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Ardent Immigration Inc. Launches Ardent Travels & Tours in Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Ardent Immigration Inc., a leading Canadian immigration consulting firm, has officially launched its travel division, Ardent Travels & Tours, in Colombo, Sri Lanka. This expansion marks a significant milestone for the Ardent Group, positioning it as a comprehensive provider of both travel and immigration services.

Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, and established in 2020, Ardent Immigration has earned a reputation for high visa approval rates and personalized client support, with offices in Prince Edward Island and Colombo. The launch of Ardent Travels & Tours enables the group to offer a seamless suite of services that include airline ticketing, custom holiday packages, hotel bookings, airport transfers, and coordinated visa assistance, delivering a fully integrated experience for clients.

Speaking on the launch Ardent Immigration in a statement noted, “On August 1st, we proudly unveiled Ardent Travels & Tours – a bold step forward in our mission to deliver exceptional, seamless, and personalized travel experiences.”

To mark this occasion, Ardent has rolled out a high-profile promotional campaign titled Sri Lanka’s Biggest Travel & Immigration Giveaway, launched in



collaboration with Ardent Immigration Inc. The campaign offers participants a free return air ticket to Canada along with complimentary visa processing, generating excitement through social media engagement and the hashtag #CanadaWithArdent.

To support its growing operations in Colombo, Ardent is currently expanding its team by recruiting skilled ticketing agents and travel executives with expertise in global distribution systems such as Amadeus. The firm’s dual-service model is designed to simplify the customer journey, offering tailored travel and immigration solutions for individuals, families, and businesses. With a curated portfolio of holiday and corporate travel packages, access to global ticketing systems, and a dedicated staff with expertise in both industries, Ardent Travels & Tours aims to set a new benchmark in the market. Through this launch, Ardent reaffirms its commitment to empowering Sri Lankans with trusted, professional, and efficient support as they navigate both travel and immigration pathways.

Lake Gregory revealed as Sri Lanka’s most Instagrammable lake

TTA BULLETIN

In celebration of World Photography Day held recently, long-haul travel specialists Travelbag have released a global study revealing the most Instagrammable lakes around the world, ideal for photo enthusiasts and nature lovers.

The study analysed over 50 of the world’s most iconic lakes, ranking them based on Instagram hashtags and TikTok posts to identify the top destinations for breathtaking scenery. It also highlighted Sri Lanka’s most photogenic lakes, especially timely during the country’s famous elephant gathering season, offering travellers a unique chance to capture stunning landscapes alongside rare wildlife moments.

Lake Gregory tops the list as Sri Lanka’s most Instagrammed lake with 47,600 hashtags, and leads on TikTok as well with 2,463 hashtags

During the famous elephant gathering season (July to September), Sri Lanka’s lakes become the stage for one of nature’s most extraordinary spectacles. These serene waters offer a rare blend of lush scenery, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant wildlife, making them a uniquely captivating part of the island’s landscape. Travellers can also visit Nuwara Eliya on guided tours, enjoying its tea plantations, colonial charm, and cool mountain air—a refreshing contrast to the tropical lowlands.

Taking the top spot in Sri Lanka is Lake



Gregory, with 47,600 Instagram hashtags and 2,463 TikTok posts. Nestled in Nuwara Eliya’s cool hill country, the lake is surrounded by tea plantations, colonial gardens, and misty peaks, perfect for serene, atmospheric shots. It’s particularly popular in August and September, when nearby Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks host the elephant gathering, providing a unique opportunity to capture stunning landscapes alongside majestic wildlife.

In second place is Kandy Lake, boasting 14,800 Instagram hashtags and 1,572 TikTok posts. Located beside the iconic Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, this cultural landmark is known for its tranquil waters, historic surroundings, and golden sunsets, ideal for reflective, mood-rich photography.

America’s Lake Tahoe ranks as the most Instagrammable lake with 3.1 million Instagram hashtags and over 51,000 TikTok posts

Taking the crown as the world’s most

Sustainable Tourism Transformation: Sri Lanka’s Youth at the Forefront

TTA BULLETIN



Sri Lanka will commemorate UN World Tourism Day 2025 with the launch of a landmark nationwide hospitality skills development programme designed for secondary school students. Spearheaded by the Alumni Association of Tourism Economics and Hospitality Management (AATEHM) of the University of Colombo and the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM), the initiative is endorsed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Tourism. Introduced under the national theme “Tourism and Sustainable Transformation”, the programme aims to create vocational awareness, instill sustainable practices, and expose students to professional hospitality standards. Open to students from Grade 9 upwards, it represents a bold step in preparing youth with the skills, values, and mindsets required to play an active role in shaping Sri Lanka’s tourism economy.

The initiative unfolds in two stages. In

September, provincial competitions will take place across all nine provinces at SLITHM regional centres and partner hotels. Winners from these rounds will advance to a series of national-level events in Colombo that spotlight the country’s commitment to youth empowerment and sustainable tourism.

The celebrations begin on 27 September with the Colombo Travel Mart 2025 at One Galle Face, where 75 stalls will bring together tour operators, travel agents, hoteliers, and international buyers. On 28 September, the focus will shift to the Sri Lanka Tourism Job Fair & Career Expo, organised by AATEHM and the Sustainable Tourism Unit with the support of SLTDA, SLAITO, SLITHM, and the University of Colombo. This will connect students, job seekers, and professionals with employers and training institutions, providing career pathways in tourism and hospitality.

PATA Travel Mart 2025 Sparks New Energy for Collaboration and Growth in Asia Pacific Tourism

TTA BULLETIN



The PATA Travel Mart 2025 (PTM 2025), the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)’s flagship international B2B travel trade event, officially commenced on Wednesday, August 27. The event welcomed over 1,000 delegates from more than 50 destinations — ranging from France and the USA to Thailand and China — including over 400 exhibitors from 225 organisations across 30 destinations, with 52% new to PTM. The Mart also brings together 225 buyers from 218 organisations across 41 source markets, 65% of whom are participating for the first time.

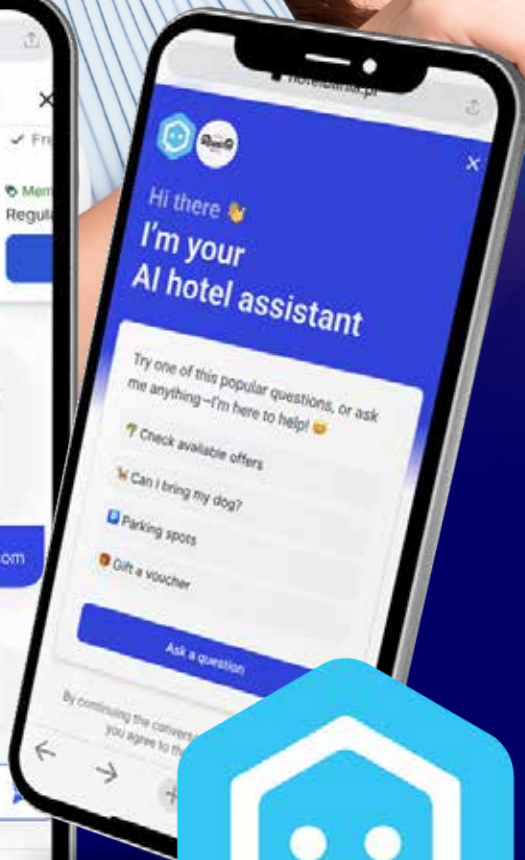
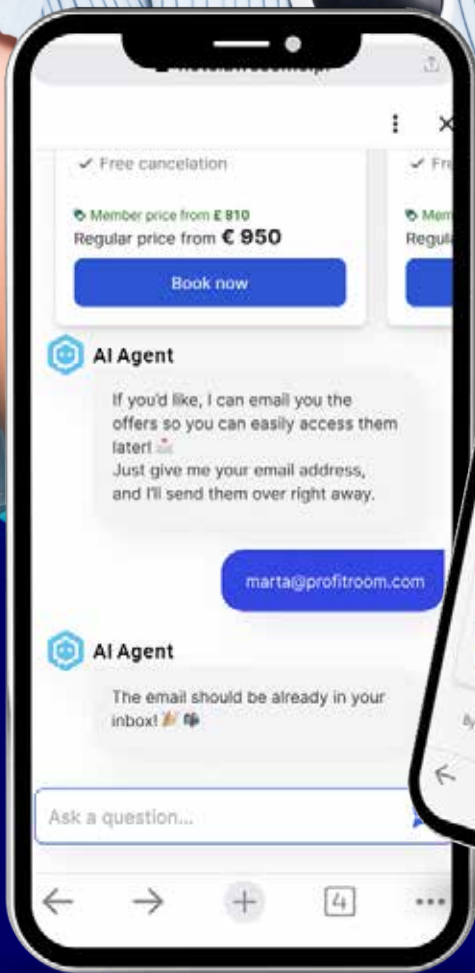
Beyond its mix of delegates from diverse markets and sectors, PTM 2025 was marked by the quality of connections and exchanges that took place. As buyers, exhibitors and leaders of Asia Pacific tourism gathered, the event fostered the sharing of insights, the building of meaningful business relationships, and the co-creation of solutions to industry challenges.

“It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to PATA Travel Mart 2025 here in the vibrant city of Bangkok, Thailand. This week, we come together to connect, collaborate, and collectively shape the future of

travel and tourism in the Asia Pacific region,” stated PATA Chair Peter Semone, during the mart’s official opening ceremony. “Yesterday, over 1,000 delegates began arriving from across the globe, reflecting the scale and collaborative spirit of this event. It is a testament to the continued relevance of PATA Travel Mart, bringing together stakeholders from across the Asia Pacific and beyond to exchange knowledge, build networks, and grow our industry.”

“I would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to our sponsors and partners for their continued support of PATA Travel Mart. Your contributions are vital to the success of this event and to the development of tourism in the Asia Pacific region.”

As part of its long-term vision, PATA invited Sharzede Datu Haji Askor, CEO of the Sarawak Tourism Board (STB), to welcome industry professionals to the PATA Travel Mart 2026. The event is set to be organised in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, from August 18 - 20, continuing the Association’s tradition of showcasing dynamic destinations and fostering collaboration across the Asia Pacific and beyond.



Say Hello to your new **Ai Agent**

Red Hat Communications and Classic Destinations Join Forces to Boost Sri Lanka Tourism in India

TTA BULLETIN

In a fresh push to attract more Indian visitors, Red Hat Communications, a leading travel communications and marketing agency, has partnered with Sri Lanka-based tour operator Classic Destinations. The collaboration is set to roll out a series of roadshows and promotional campaigns designed to strengthen Sri Lanka's position as a preferred getaway for Indian travellers.

The initiative will span multiple Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities in India, spotlighting the island's diverse appeal — from golden beaches and tea-covered hills to wildlife-rich national parks and ancient temples. With India emerging as one of the most promising source markets in the post-pandemic landscape, the programme aims to deepen trade relationships, boost travel skills, and generate greater tourism revenue.

Commenting on the partnership, Jyoti Mayal, CEO of Red Hat Communications, noted that the two nations' shared cultural and historical connections make Sri Lanka a natural choice for Indian holidaymakers.

“Our goal is to reposition Sri Lanka as an all-season destination,” she said. “Through targeted roadshows, we aim to inspire travel professionals and consumers alike, encouraging them to see Sri Lanka in a new light. With Classic Destinations' exceptional local knowledge and our dedicated teams across India, we're confident this venture will open up fresh opportunities for the travel trade.”

Chalaka Gajabahu, Head of Classic Destinations, echoed the enthusiasm, emphasising the company's readiness to deliver memorable, tailor-made experiences for Indian travellers. “This collaboration is about combining our strengths to create curated journeys that connect with Indian tastes and interests,” he said.

The campaign's first phase will launch in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai, followed by Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, and Jaipur. Activities will include B2B networking, destination training for agents, influencer tie-ups, airline and hotel co-promotions, and innovative travel showcases.

Shining The Spotlight On Purposeful Engagements, Incentives, and Wellness-Centred Programming

TTA BULLETIN

This year's IT&CM Asia and CTW Asia-Pacific will present an expanded educational programme in partnership with leading industry thought leaders, that places a strong focus on wellbeing, sustainability, and purposeful engagement. Designed to inspire attendees to integrate these values into MICE and business travel planning, the event promises dynamic sessions and interactive experiences that go beyond traditional learning. From Keynote to Roundtables: Engaging Content Focused on Business Travel and Wellness Delegates can look forward to an enriching three-day conference featuring expert-led sessions that encourage innovation, resilience, and collaboration in the business events and corporate travel sectors. The agenda aligns with TCEB's latest campaign “Meet Well” which advocates for mindful and rejuvenating travel experiences.

On 23 September, Noor Ahmad Hamid, CEO of PATA, will present Shaping the Future of Travel, touching on the global travel outlook, an essential topic in today's rapidly evolving landscape where global events continue to shape travel behaviour for both personal and business trends. In addition, the Pulse Check: Well-Being in Events and Business Travel session will explore mindfulness as a strategic element in event design, delegate engagement, and travel programmes. Moderated by David Barrett, Consultant Events at The Slate, Phuket, the panel discussion will feature panellists like Bhumikitti Ruktaengam, President of The Sustainable Tourism Development Foundation Phuket; David

Boucher, Chief Executive Officer of Bumrungrad International Hospital Phuket & Phuket Market; and Rubel Miah, General Manager of Mövenpick BDMS Wellness Resort Bangkok.

On 24 September, two thought leadership sessions will take centre stage. The first conference session, INSIDE MICE: Trends and Data for Strategic Decision-Making by the Global MICE Collaborative, will provide a data-driven global perspective on industry trends. The second session, Power of Collaboration: Building Stronger Connections for a Resilient Future by ICCA, will highlight the role of cross-sector alliances in fostering innovation and sustainable growth.

On 25 September, the discussion will shift to food as a wellness driver in Beyond Nutrition: Future Food, Personal Wellness & Sustainable Hospitality Ecosystems by Tastebud Lab. Through a special collaboration with CTW Asia-Pacific powered by GBTA, there will also be Meet the Corporate, an exclusive networking session designed to connect corporate travel buyers with suppliers. Another highlight is Corporate Travel World Exchange's “Bleisure & Hush Trips: The Corporate Risk Dilemma”, featuring presentations, panels, and peer-to-peer exchanges on challenges and best practices.

In collaboration with leading universities, PATA will host a youth-focused session under the theme “Empowering the Next Generation of Tourism Leaders”. The programme aims to inspire future tourism

India International Travel Mart' Returns to Pune and Hyderabad

TTA BULLETIN

India's premier travel trade exhibitions promising to bring together the best of the global and domestic travel industry under one roof. IITM continues to lead the way as the region's most impactful platform for B2B tourism engagement.



IITM Pune: 27 – 29 November 2025 will be at the Expo Centre, Deccan College, Yerawada and IITM Hyderabad: 4 – 6 December 2025 will be at Hall No. 2, HITEC Exhibition Centre, Kondapur Post

Now in its successful 26th year in these cities, IITM has emerged as India's Biggest Travel Event, drawing participation from leading national and international tourism boards, travel operators, hospitality brands, technology providers, and other key stakeholders from the tourism ecosystem. With a focus on business networking, knowledge exchange, and destination promotion, both editions of IITM will host hosted buyers, travel trade professionals over three days of immersive interactions, workshops, and showcases.

India International Travel Mart (IITM) stands as one of India's longest-running and most trusted travel trade shows. With over two decades of legacy, IITM has continually evolved to meet the dynamic needs of the tourism sector, offering a unique blend of business networking, knowledge exchange, and trade engagement.

Mr. Sanjay Hakhu, Director, Sphere Travelmedia & Exhibitions, the organizers of IITM, said: “Over the years, India International Travel Mart has become a landmark event in India's tourism

calendar. “India International Travel Mart play a vital role in driving the growth of the tourism industry by creating direct engagement between destinations, travel brands, and buyers. They not only showcase emerging opportunities but also act as a catalyst for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and new business partnerships that help the industry thrive.”

Mr. Rohit Hangal, Director, Sphere Travelmedia & Exhibitions, added: “With Pune and Hyderabad being among India's fastest growing travel and tourism markets, hosting the India International Travel Mart in these cities gives us an opportunity to bring together key stakeholders, promote new destinations, and create stronger networks for the industry. These editions underline our commitment to providing a robust platform for domestic and international participants to showcase, connect, and drive growth for India's travel and tourism sector.”

The exhibitions will feature dedicated pavilions for domestic destinations, international tourism boards, luxury travel, experiential tourism, travel technology, and sustainable travel solutions—providing unmatched opportunities for networking and collaboration.

The Fort Café by Tasty Caterers Opens in the Heart of Colombo's Business District

TTA BULLETIN

Tasty Caterers, a trusted name in Sri Lanka's culinary scene for over four decades, proudly announces the opening of The Fort Café by Tasty, a vibrant new dining destination located in the iconic Australia Building in the heart of Colombo Fort.

Designed to be as visually captivating as it is delicious, The Fort Café offers an Instagram-worthy interior that blends contemporary style with warm, inviting touches – the perfect backdrop for casual meet-ups, business lunches, private functions or a relaxing coffee break.

The menu brings together some of Tasty's most cherished favourites, alongside an array of fresh creations crafted for the café experience. Guests can indulge in everything from light snack items to hearty main meals, and a tempting selection of delectable desserts. To complement the food, the café serves barista-style coffee made from premium beans and artisanal teas carefully selected

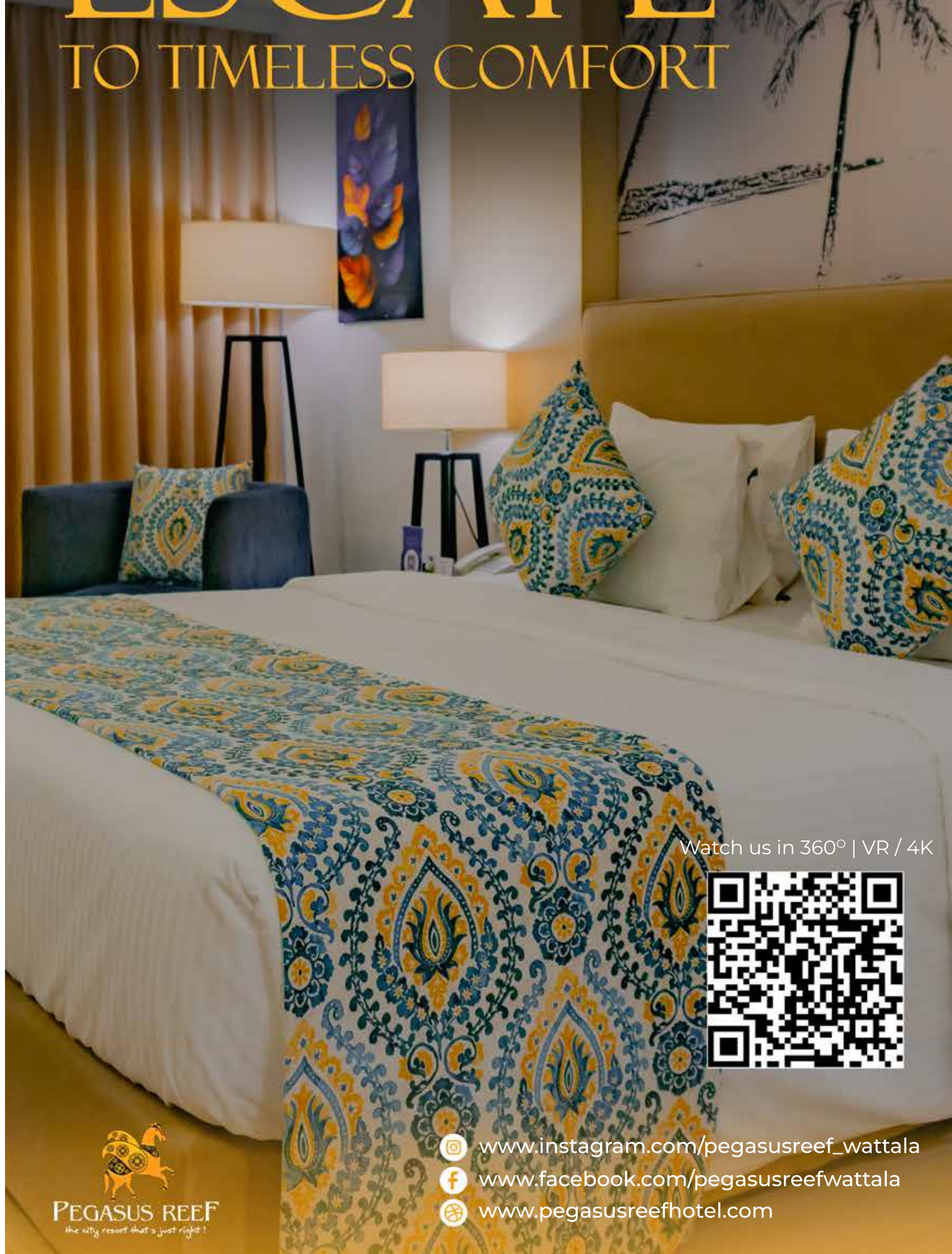
for flavour and aroma. The curated high-tea menu is available on demand with a delectable array of fine finger food.

“We wanted to create a space where people could not only enjoy the flavours they know and love from Tasty, but also experience them in a new, contemporary setting,” said Kanthi Jayamaha Chairperson of Tasty Caterers. “The Fort Café is about great food and a warm and inviting atmosphere that makes you want to linger. We have taken great care to ensure that the menu offers a wide variety of items that suit the busy working demographic of patrons in the Fort area while working on some interesting offerings for the weekends”

The Fort Café by Tasty is open seven days a week, catering to Colombo's busy professionals, shoppers, and visitors alike. Whether it's a quick breakfast before work, a leisurely lunch with friends, or an afternoon pick-me-up, the café offers a welcoming escape in the heart of the city.

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HOTELS

Anantara Kalutara Resort Celebrates Nine Years of Architectural Splendour, Cultural Discovery, and Global Luxury on Sri Lanka's Southern Coast

TTA BULLETIN



Anantara Kalutara Resort proudly celebrates its 9th anniversary, marking nearly a decade as one of the island's most distinguished luxury destinations. Since opening its doors in 2016, the resort has offered guests a rare blend of architectural brilliance, cultural immersion, and adventurous discovery, becoming a hallmark of hospitality on Sri Lanka's southern coastline.

Designed by the late Geoffrey Bawa, Sri Lanka's most celebrated architect and a pioneer of tropical modernism, Anantara Kalutara is a living testament to design that transcends time. Built on the confluence of the Indian Ocean and the serene Kalu Ganga River, the resort embodies Bawa's vision of harmony between built space and the surrounding natural world. With open courtyards, breezy corridors, and lush tropical landscaping, the property continues to inspire admiration as one of Bawa's final creations, bridging Sri Lanka's architectural heritage with the standards of Anantara Hotels globally.

Over the past nine years, the resort has welcomed local and international travellers seeking everything from family-friendly escapes to romantic getaways and immersive cultural journeys. Guests are offered a choice of luxuriously appointed rooms, suites, and villas, many featuring private pools and sweeping ocean or river views. Culinary experiences range from authentic Sri Lankan cuisine to international fine dining, offering a journey through both local flavours and global palates.

For those with an adventurous spirit, Anantara Kalutara Resort has become a hub of discovery by air, water, and land with a wide selection of activities and guided tours. Thrilling day excursions invite guests to explore the wildlife sanctuaries, heritage sites, and surf breaks of Sri Lanka's southern belt, making the

resort not just a destination, but a gateway to the island's wonders.

Beyond luxury and leisure, Anantara Kalutara Resort is deeply connected to the cultural and historical richness of Sri Lanka. The town of Kalutara itself, once a prominent spice-trading hub, is home to landmarks such as the Kalutara Bodhiya and rich Buddhist traditions. The resort builds upon this legacy, curating experiences that introduce guests to Sri Lanka's arts, crafts, rituals, and culinary traditions. From cooking classes and cultural performances to temple visits and artisan workshops, every stay offers a chance to connect with the island's soul.

"Marking nine years is a proud moment for us," said Mr. Keith Tomkies, Cluster General Manager of Anantara Kalutara & Avani Kalutara Resorts. "We are honoured to carry forward Geoffrey Bawa's legacy while enriching the guest experience through Anantara's promise of luxury and discovery. Our resort continues to be a destination where travellers find inspiration, whether through adventure, cultural connection, or pure relaxation."

As Anantara Kalutara steps into its ninth year, the resort reaffirms its commitment to sustainability, cultural preservation, and innovative hospitality. Expanding wellness journeys, enhancing culinary showcases, and continuing community collaborations will remain at the heart of its vision, ensuring guests experience not only the beauty of Sri Lanka but also the values that sustain it.

With its unparalleled design, rich cultural setting, adventurous spirit, and the prestige of the Anantara and Minor Hotels brand, Anantara Kalutara continues to set new benchmarks for hospitality in Sri Lanka—welcoming the world to discover the southern coast through a lens of timeless artistry and meaningful travel.

Jetwing Hotels Announces Management of Villa 700

TTA BULLETIN

Jetwing Hotels has recently welcomed Villa 700 into its family of distinctive properties. Located in the tranquil coastal village of Induruwa, in Bentota, this beachfront property is known for its serene ambiance and elegant simplicity. It joins Jetwing's portfolio of unique accommodations, promising guests an experience that blends luxury, nature, and legendary Sri Lankan hospitality.

Now known as Jetwing Villa 700, the property offers five thoughtfully appointed rooms, including a spacious suite that opens to uninterrupted views of the Indian Ocean. The villa's design is minimalist yet refined, with each room carefully curated to reflect the tropical surroundings. Air conditioning, flat-screen televisions, and private bathrooms ensure comfort, while balconies and terraces in select rooms invite guests to unwind with the soothing sound of the waves.

An outdoor swimming pool offers a refreshing escape amidst the tropical surroundings, while complimentary Wi-Fi and private parking add convenience. The villa's dining room delights with a diverse selection of local and international cuisine, featuring an à la carte menu alongside thoughtfully crafted set menus that cater to a variety of tastes.

Jetwing Hotels, founded by the late Herbert Cooray, has long been synonymous with excellence in Sri Lankan tourism. With a legacy built on values of passion, integrity, and sustainability, the brand continues to redefine hospitality by embracing local culture and environmental stewardship. The addition of this



property reflects Jetwing's commitment to curating distinctive stays that highlight the finest elements of each destination, offering intimate getaways that celebrate Sri Lanka's tropical beauty.

Beyond the villa's tranquil setting, guests have access to a variety of nearby attractions. Just a short drive away lies the Lunuganga Estate, the former country home of renowned architect Geoffrey Bawa, now a garden estate that showcases his visionary design. The Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery offers a glimpse into vital conservation efforts, while the Brief Garden, created by Geoffrey's brother, Bevis Bawa, presents another stunning example of landscape artistry. For those drawn to sun and surf, the property's seamless connection to Induruwa's shoreline and easy access to Bentota Beach make it an ideal coastal escape.

With Jetwing Hotels now at the helm, Villa 700 is poised to become a premier destination for travelers seeking a harmonious blend of comfort, culture, and coastal serenity. Whether it's a romantic escape, a family holiday, or a solo retreat, Jetwing Villa 700 promises an unforgettable experience along Sri Lanka's southern shores.

Celebrate Love in Regal Splendour at Earl's Regency, Kandy

TTA BULLETIN

This wedding season, Earl's Regency – nestled in the dramatic hills and overlooking the serene Mahaweli River – emerges as the ultimate destination for couples seeking an unforgettable, camera-worthy setting to celebrate their love. With its grand banqueting halls, beautifully landscaped grounds, and sophisticated backdrop, it's the perfect setting for an elegant wedding or photo-shoot filled with timeless charm.



Earl's Regency offers both indoor and outdoor spaces that harmonise regal architecture with the natural beauty of Kandy's lush mountains. Whether you envision a traditional Kandyan ceremony or a contemporary celebration, the hotel provides stylish venues that transform dreams into reality.

The Regent Ballroom seats up to 550 guests, while the Congress Hall accommodates intimate gatherings of up to 150, ideal for weddings or lavish events. Outdoor options such as the Regent Terrace and the Far Pavillion Terrace, paired with sweeping hill-country views,

make for breathtaking moments and compelling photo backdrops.

At Earl's Regency, your event comes with a gastronomic journey. The Far Pavillion delivers sumptuous buffets with live-action stations, and themed dinners – ranging from Sri Lankan favourites to international delights – setting the stage for memorable feasting.

The hotel also features King's Court Restaurant, which offers a masterful fusion of European, Asian, Indian, and Sri Lankan flavours and Mountbatten Lounge, which is perfect for leisurely drinks and pre-wedding gatherings.

A recent newly-wed praised the impeccable service and culinary artistry saying: "The food was simply outstanding, from the way it was prepared to the beautiful presentation, and the taste was just

George Steuart & Co. 190th Year Celebrations at Shangri La Colombo

George Steuart & Co. Ltd., Sri Lanka's oldest mercantile establishment celebrates its 190th anniversary in 2025 - an extraordinary milestone for Sri Lanka. To mark this milestone celebration, the Chairman and the Board of Directors hosted loyal partners, dignitaries, well wishers and friends to an evening of entertainment and comradery at the Shangri La Hotel in Colombo.

George Steuart Group 38th Chairman Sarva Ameresekere said: "George Steuart is bigger than any individual, place or a moment in time. It is about people with a shared belief in our founding values, which have been nurtured and passed on from one generation to the next. We will make every effort to chart its course into the continued corporate success story of Sri Lanka and

beyond. Currently, our local and export revenues stand at almost 50:50, with less than 5% of revenue from the state sector. As we enter a decade that takes us to an incredible 200 years of business, our focus is on increasing our export revenues and expanding our global footprint."



World Gourmet Festival 2025 Unveils Full Line-Up for its Landmark 25th Edition at Anantara Siam Bangkok Hotel

TTA BULLETIN



Anantara Siam Bangkok Hotel, in partnership with The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), United Overseas Bank (UOB), Chang, Diageo, Tatler Asia, Turkish Airlines and Maserati Thailand, proudly unveils the full programme for the 25th Annual World Gourmet Festival, returning from 22–28 September 2025 with its most ambitious and prestigious edition to date. Marking its Silver Jubilee, the festival celebrates 25 years of culinary excellence with a week-long series of extraordinary events featuring the world’s top chefs, restaurants, and tastemakers.

With events already selling fast, this landmark edition promises an unmatched celebration of flavour, artistry, and global connection, set within the refined grandeur of Anantara Siam.

This milestone edition will bring together an unprecedented constellation of culinary stars from across the globe — including 16 Michelin-starred restaurants, representing a combined 22 stars, four Green Star honourees pioneering sustainable gastronomy; seven restaurants ranked on The World’s 50 Best and Asia’s 50 Best lists; and four chefs who have received global accolades, including World’s Best Female Chef, Asia’s Best Female Chef, and Asia’s Best Pastry Chef.

For one week only, Bangkok becomes the epicentre of international culinary collaboration, with a programme curated by Kristian Brask Thomsen, the renowned culinary storyteller behind Dining Impossible and strategist to many of the world’s leading restaurants. His vision has shaped the 25th edition into a powerful narrative of taste, talent, and transformation—uniting legacy names, rising stars, and trailblazing creators in one unforgettable series of events.

Guests can look forward to dining with Eric Vildgaard (Jordnær, Copenhagen), Vaughan Mabee (Amisfield, New Zealand), Choi Ming Fai Jan (MORA, Hong Kong), Dave Pynt (Burnt Ends, Singapore), Prin Polsuk (Samrub Samrub Thai, Bangkok), Paco Méndez (COME, Barcelona), Grégoire Berger (Ossiano, Dubai), Francisco Araya (Araya, Singapore), Santiago Fernandez (MAZ, Japan), Deepanker “DK” Khosla (Haoma, Bangkok), Paul Gamauf (EDVARD,

Vienna), Peter Cường Franklin – Anan, Ho Chi Minh City, Francesco Stara (Fradis Minoris, Sardinia), Pichaya “Pam” Soontornyanakij (Potong, Bangkok), Thitid “Ton” Tassanakajohn (Le Du, Nusara, Bangkok), Mathias & Thomas Sühling (Sühling, Bangkok), Janice Wong (Singapore/Australia), Michael Dyllong (Germany), Jimmy Ophorst (PRU, Phuket), Chudaree “Tam” Debhakam (Baan Tapa, Bangkok), Sujira Pongmorn (Saawaan, Bangkok), Sirorat Thowtho (Thailand), and Arttasi Pattanasatiengkul & Nattaphon Othanawathakij (Thailand).

The festival’s signature format returns with a nightly trio of experiences. Gourmet Discovery showcases once-in-a-lifetime collaborations between global icons—pairings never before seen, and never to be repeated. Gourmet Encounters brings together world-famous chefs with Thailand’s most celebrated culinary talent in a spirit of cultural exchange. Gourmet Icons offers solo tasting menus from international legends, giving guests the rare opportunity to experience a master’s vision in full.

Daytime programming includes panel discussions, masterclasses, wine and mixology experiences, and an iconic afternoon tea hosted by Asia’s leading dessert visionary, Janice Wong. The week is bookended by a spectacular opening night soiree in the hotel’s ballroom and a closing brunch to toast the festival’s stars and stories, held in Parichart Court.

Each evening, guests are invited to choose from a dynamic programme across Anantara Siam’s celebrated restaurants:

Shintaro – an intimate Japanese dining room hosting refined menus by Choi Ming Fai Jan, Jimmy Ophorst and Peter Cường Franklin.

Madison – the hotel’s chic steakhouse, the stage for bold collaborations such as Dave Pynt with Prin Polsuk, and Thitid “Ton” Tassanakajohn with Vaughan Mabee.

Biscotti – the iconic Italian institution reimagined with avant-garde menus by Grégoire Berger, Francesco Stara and Pam Soontornyanakij.

The First Harvest of Browns Hotels & Resorts’ Bee Honey Farming Initiative

TTA BULLETIN

In the heart of Sri Lanka’s Cultural Triangle, Browns Hotels & Resorts has marked a milestone as meaningful as it is sweet: the very first harvest of its Sustainable Bee Honey Farming Initiative, a unique collaboration across three of its properties: Hotel Sigiriya, Occidental Paradise Dambulla and Ayugiri Ayurveda Wellness Resort. What began with a few buzzing bee boxes has now grown into thriving colonies, yielding their first golden honey after eight months of care and dedication.



reinforcing its long-term commitment and vision to supporting home-grown livelihoods in a meaningful way. To celebrate, an event was hosted at Hotel Sigiriya, bringing together the nearby villagers and hotel staff to mark this achievement. During the gathering, participants were commended for their dedication and care in nurturing the colonies, and were introduced to the wider vision of Phase Two of the project, which will focus on sustainability, biodiversity, and income development. The event served both as a celebration and a heartfelt thank you for their commitment.

“This first harvest is a beautiful reminder of what happens when sustainability, community, and hospitality work hand in hand. By nurturing bee populations in the Cultural Triangle, the project creates an impact that stretches far beyond the hotels themselves. Each jar of honey holds more than sweetness: it carries the story of empowered families, thriving biodiversity, and the authentic traditions we are proud to share with every guest” said Eksath Wijeratne, CEO of Browns Hotels & Resorts.

Bee colonies, do more than produce

Launched initially in July 2024, the programme was designed to equip rural communities with income-generating skills and sustainable livelihood opportunities, safeguard pollinators, and enrich local biodiversity. Guided by S. K. Kulasinghe, Agriculture Instructor and Beekeeping Subject Matter Officer from the Department of Agriculture, the project engaged local families in the neighbouring villages from the very outset. Some of the activities included community awareness sessions, where participants learnt about eco-beekeeping and the importance of pollinators to the environment, and distribution of bee boxes amongst community members and hotel properties, arming them with the resources and knowledge to begin nurturing their own hives.

Over the months that followed, regular colony audits and expert guidance ensured healthy and thriving bee populations. By August 2025, the first harvest was ready, and Browns Hotels & Resorts purchased the carefully nurtured bee honey from the local community, thereby

A Rare Culinary Encore: Chef Azam Riyard Elevates the Dry-Aged Experience at London Grill

TTA BULLETIN

In celebration of fifty years of gastronomic distinction, London Grill at Cinnamon Grand Colombo proudly presents the highly anticipated return of Chef Azam Riyard, the internationally acclaimed culinary maestro known as “The Dry-Aged Steak Guy.”



ing the depth of flavour and precision that define Chef Azam’s culinary philosophy.

To complement the carnivorous artistry, guests can also delight in Grilled Jumbo Tiger Prawns, Mediterranean Grilled Lobster, and signature accompaniments such as truffle-infused mash, chargrilled asparagus, and sautéed Portobello mushrooms.

From 1st to 14th September 2025, guests are invited to immerse themselves in an exclusive dining series where artistry meets fire. Chef Azam, the visionary force behind AGED Steakhouse, London—Europe’s first halal dry-aged steakhouse brings back his signature flair, redefining the steak experience for Colombo’s most discerning diners.

A Curated Celebration of Fire and Flavour For two exceptional weeks, the London Grill transforms into a stage of bold indulgence and refined taste. Diners will experience a meticulously crafted menu of premium dry-aged cuts, each embody-

The Legacy of Chef Azam Riyard Renowned for his mastery of dry-aging and fire-driven cooking, Chef Azam has honed his craft in some of Europe’s most celebrated kitchens before founding AGED Steakhouse in London—a unique dining destination set within a medieval landmark where history and innovation unite.

With limited seats available, this rare culinary encore promises an unforgettable celebration of fire, flavour, and finesse.

A Gentle Step Towards the Wild: Shangri-La Reaffirms Its Commitment to Sri Lanka's Wildlife with the Adoption of Baby Elephant El-la

TTA BULLETIN

Shangri-La Colombo and Shangri-La Hambantota have reaffirmed their long-standing commitment to sustainability, biodiversity, and meaningful local partnerships through the adoption of a baby elephant—affectionately named El-la ('El' for elephant + 'La' for Shangri-La)—in collaboration with the Elephant Transit Home (ETH) in Udawalawe, Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka is home to approximately 4,000 wild elephants, a number that has declined dramatically from over 12,000 in the early 20th century. Today, the survival of these iconic animals is under increasing threat. In 2024 more than 388 elephants lost their lives, and in the first seven months of 2025 alone, over 44 elephants were killed by gunfire—largely due to escalating human-elephant conflict, driven by shrinking habitats and the encroachment on traditional elephant corridors.

Behind these statistics are stories—of orphaned calves left alone after their mothers were killed, of fractured herds, and of young elephants with no clear path forward. Ella's story is one of them. Born in the forests of Sri Lanka's North Central Province, Ella was separated from her herd and fell into an agricultural well. Alone and vulnerable, she was rescued by wildlife officers and brought to the Elephant Transit Home—a place of healing, preparation, and hope.

Since 1995, the ETH, under the Department of Wildlife Conservation, has been at the forefront of elephant rescue and rehabilitation. Located on the border of Udawalawe National Park, the centre has rescued over 300 orphaned elephants, with more than 198 successfully released back into the wild. Unlike traditional sanctuaries, the ETH ensures minimal human interaction, preparing the young elephants for a fully independent life in their natural habitat.

Shangri-La Colombo and Shangri-La Hambantota are committing over USD 10,000 to care for, rehabilitate, and prepare El-la release over the next four years—protecting one life, and with it, a piece of Sri Lanka's wild future.

Through a five-year adoption agreement, Shangri-La will fund and support Ella's care, nutrition, medical treatment, and rewilding process—becoming a part of her journey from vulnerable orphan to strong, free-roaming elephant.

This initiative reflects Shangri-La's promise to be more than a place to stay—it is a tangible act of guardianship, where our spirit of sanctuary extends to protecting the living heritage around us. Rooted in the brand's ethos, it embraces sustainability, biodiversity, heartfelt hospitality, and a deep respect for culture, heritage, and community.



Under Shangri-La's global Sanctuary programme, Ella's story embodies the pillars that guide our purpose—protecting what is precious, living in harmony with nature, creating purpose-led guest journeys, and building emotional connections that go far beyond the stay.

"Ella is more than a conservation project; she represents our deep and ongoing responsibility to the land, people, and heritage of this island we are proud to call home," said Refhan Razeen, General Manager of Shangri-La Hambantota. "Our resort is surrounded by Sri Lanka's natural splendour—and this initiative is a reflection of our duty to protect it."

Hervé Duboscq, General Manager of Shangri-La Colombo, added: "At Shangri-La, we believe that true hospitality extends beyond service—it embraces stewardship. Supporting Ella's journey is an embodiment of that belief, and a reminder that care for the wild is care for our future."

Guests at both Shangri-La properties will be invited to follow Ella's progress through thoughtfully curated experiences, conservation storytelling, and a bespoke collection of eco-conscious merchandise.

In a world where nature's balance is increasingly fragile, Shangri-La continues to stand gently, but firmly, in its role as guardian of what is precious.

Shangri-La, an iconic flagship brand of the Shangri-La Group, puts heartfelt service at the core of its distinctive Asian hospitality experience. Through imaginative and nature-inspired design, delightful culinary and cultural experiences, and its authentic and thoughtful service, the brand enables guests to realise their own moments of Shangri-La.

Today, the brand experience is brought to life in over 90 deluxe hotels and resorts at destinations around the world, including Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Mainland China, Hong Kong SAR and Taiwan, Fiji, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sultanate of Oman, Thailand, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts Wins "Leadership in Gender Equality" at Inaugural DEI Champions Awards 2025

TTA BULLETIN



Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts has been recognised as a winner at the inaugural DEI Champions Awards 2025 awarded for "Leadership in Gender Equality" category, in celebration of its exceptional commitment to fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) across its operations.

Organised by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce under the SCOPE Programme, co-financed by the European Union and the German Federal Foreign Office, and implemented by GIZ Sri Lanka in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and National Integration, this landmark initiative acknowledges businesses leading the way in embedding inclusive values into their organisational culture.

The award recognises Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts' holistic approach to DE&I, with progressive efforts that go far beyond recruitment and hiring. In retention, the organisation addresses every aspect from safety and facilities to learning, engagement, and more while advancing female leadership, empowering underrepresented communities, supporting persons with disabilities, and fostering youth development. Signature programmes such as EmpowHer, the PWD Inclusion Plan, and community engagement projects like Hikka Batiks, Palmyra Creations, the Diriyata Athwalak Project, and The

Kadjan Roof Weaving Project in the Maldives have further strengthened the organisation's impact.

"We are honoured to be recognised as a DEI Champion. At Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, inclusion is embedded in the way we operate. We believe diversity fuels creativity, equity drives opportunity, and inclusion inspires belonging. This award reflects the collective commitment of our teams to building a more inclusive future for the hospitality industry and the communities we serve," said Hishan Singha Wansa, CEO, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts.

The DEI Champions Awards 2025 brought together both SMEs and corporates, with the evening graced by Industries and Entrepreneurship Development Deputy Minister Chathuranga Abeysinghe, National Integration Deputy Minister Muneer Mullafer and The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce Chairman Krishan Balendra, the event brought together over 250 participants, including industry leaders, entrepreneurs, policymakers and development partners.

This achievement reaffirms Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts' position as a pioneer in shaping inclusive hospitality in Sri Lanka and the Maldives, offering a blueprint for other organisations to follow.





Browns

HOTELS & RESORTS

CROWNED FOR EXCELLENCE IN *Hospitality*



Browns Hotels & Resorts was celebrated at the 20th National Business Excellence Awards 2025 with dual honours for Thaala Bentota and Reveal the Collection, Mirissa under the Hospitality and Tourism category.

Built on purpose, powered by people—We have earned our place in business excellence by attracting travellers from near and far, helping to strengthen the national economy and enriching local communities. Today's traveller seeks more than comfort. They seek connection and a story worth telling. That's exactly what we deliver—every stay, every smile, every time.

We invite you to discover Browns Hotels & Resorts—where award-winning hospitality isn't a claim, it's a guarantee.

Thaala ^{BENTOTA}  REVEAL



National Business Excellence Awards 2025



HOTELS

Browns Hotels & Resorts Shines at the 20th National Business Excellence Awards 2025

TTA BULLETIN



Browns Hotels & Resorts (BHR) was recently honoured at the 20th National Business Excellence Awards (NBEA) 2025, organised by the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka. Winning under the Hospitality and Tourism sector for Reveal the Collection, Mirissa and Thaala Bentota, this dual recognition marks a significant milestone in BHR's journey of purposeful hospitality, innovation, and sustainable development. A renowned event, the annual NBEA celebrates business excellence and ethical leadership across key sectors that actively contribute to the nation's economic growth.

The awards were received by the senior leadership of Browns Hotels & Resorts, including CEO Eksath Wijeratne, along with Rohan Gamage, General Manager of Thaala Bentota, and Arul Ambikaibalan, General Manager of Reveal the Collection, Mirissa.

Rooted in the architectural legacy of

Geoffrey Bawa, Thaala Bentota stands out not only for its distinctive design ethos but also for its deep commitment to authentic Sri Lankan hospitality. Its flagship sustainability initiative, the Rathamilla Mangrove Conservation Project, along with several meaningful community and conservation efforts, has brought the resort into the spotlight. Under the leadership of General Manager, Rohan Gamage, who continues to lead the team with a hands-on approach, the resort has redefined the guest journey through a thoughtful blend of relaxation, culture, and adventure.

Reveal the Collection, Mirissa—the luxury boutique arm of Browns Hotels & Resorts—comprising The Beach House, Lantern Boutique Hotel, and two Ubuntu Beach Villas, has become known for offering intimate coastal escapes that go beyond traditional luxury. Under the leadership of General Manager Arul Ambikaibalan, the team has redefined boutique hospitality by connecting guests

Pegasus Inter-department Cricket Tournament Champions

TTA BULLETIN

Pegasus Reef Hotel proudly hosted its annual Inter-Department Cricket Tournament on 11th August 2025 at the Nawaloka Grounds, Welisara. The highly anticipated event brought together staff from across the hotel for a day filled with team work, energy, and sporting spirit. Congratulations to the Food & Beverage Department, crowned Champions 2025! The Kitchen Department secured the Runners-Up title in this thrilling competition.



Sri Lanka's Best Chef of the Year Joins Mount Lavinia Hotel

TTA BULLETIN

Mount Lavinia Hotel has strengthened its position as one of Sri Lanka's premier hospitality destinations with the appointment of Chef Dushan Rukmal Samarasekera, popularly known as Chef Rukie, as its new Director of Culinary Operations. Fresh from being awarded Sri Lanka's Best Chef of the Year 2024/2025 at the National Tourism Awards, Chef Rukie's arrival brings international expertise and award-winning recognition that will elevate the hotel's culinary standards and guest experiences.



The appointment of Chef Rukie marks a new chapter for Mount Lavinia Hotel, blending tradition with innovation. His leadership is expected to introduce contemporary dining concepts, celebrate fusion flavors, and further strengthen the hotel's reputation as a world-class culinary destination.

With over 20 years of international culinary mastery, Chef Rukie has carved a name as one of Sri Lanka's most celebrated chefs, blending refined techniques with creative artistry. His journey has taken him across Sri Lanka, Italy, Dubai, Bahrain, Oman, Bermuda, and New York, where he has honed his craft in some of the world's most prestigious kitchens.

Chef Rukie's career was shaped by his formative years in Italy, where he worked at Castel Monastero, Toscana, Siena, and

the Eleganzia Hotels & Spas group, gaining invaluable experience alongside world-renowned chefs. He has collaborated with an elite circle of Michelin-starred masters, including Gordon Ramsay (3 Michelin Stars), Albert & Ferran Adrià of El Bulli (3 Michelin Stars), Didier Courlou (1 Michelin Star, French & Vietnamese Cuisine), and Melker Andersson (1 Michelin Star, Sweden). He was also part of signature promotions such as Solegraells Textures at The Domain Hotel with Ana Alvarez & Fatima Gismero.

COO of Mount Lavinia Hotel Group, Mr. Anura Dewapura, shared his thoughts on the appointment: "We are delighted to welcome Chef Rukie to Mount Lavinia Hotel. His vast international exposure and award-winning expertise will add tremendous value to our culinary offering. With his leadership, we aim to provide guests with dining experiences that are not only of the highest global standards but also true to the rich heritage of Mount Lavinia Hotel."

Speaking about his new role, Chef Rukie added: "Mount Lavinia Hotel is a symbol of heritage, culture, and hospitality — not just in Sri Lanka but across the world. It is a privilege to bring my international experience back home and contribute to the legacy of this remarkable property. My goal is to create dining experiences

Dusit brings its 'Tree of Life' sustainability vision to Chiang Rai

TTA BULLETIN

Dusit International, one of Thailand's leading hotel and property development companies, has expanded its sustainable hospitality vision by taking on the management of Tantawan Tented Camp, a refined tented retreat where northern Thai traditions meet a strong commitment to sustainability, set amidst the scenic mountains of Chiang Rai.



Located just 40 minutes from Chiang Rai International Airport, this serene, boutique hideaway features 10 spacious safari-style tents – from two-bedroom family options to a romantic one-bedroom suite – each with private bathrooms, handcrafted teak furniture, modern comforts, and sweeping valley views. Guests can enjoy a curated programme of meaningful experiences, from trekking and cooking classes to tree-planting programmes and meditation sessions, all designed to connect them deeply with the local culture and environment.

Set to become a living showcase of Dusit's group-wide Tree of Life programme, which integrates environmental stewardship, community engagement, and social impact across 31 criteria linked to selected UN Sustainable Development Goals, Tantawan Tented Camp is uniquely positioned to promote responsible tourism with measurable benefits for both local communities and the environment.

"Managing Tantawan Tented Camp gives us a fantastic opportunity to bring the Tree of Life vision to life beyond our branded properties and showcase our commitment to having a positive impact wherever we operate," said Gilles Cretallaz, Chief Operating Officer, Dusit International. "From sourcing food directly from the farm to providing education and training for girls and young women, this property shows how sustainability and hospitality can work hand in hand. With work experience opportunities through our educational arm, we can create transformative pathways for the next generation while offering guests an unforgettable and meaningful experience."

Tantawan Tented Camp joins a growing portfolio of distinctive independent properties managed by Dusit in Thailand, including Seapine Beach Golf and Resort, Hua Hin; Green Lake Resort, Chiang Mai; and Chainarai Riverside, Chiang Rai – each benefiting from Dusit's service standards and operational expertise while retaining their own unique identity.

Hilton Yala Resort Marks Second Anniversary

Hilton Yala Resort recently marked its second anniversary with a vibrant series of celebrations that brought together guests, team members, and the wider community. The milestone was honored over several days with curated guest experiences, engaging team member activities, and spiritual blessings that reflected the resort's ethos of blending wild beauty, cultural heritage, and heartfelt hospitality.



HOTELS

Breezy Kite Festival 2025 – A Sky Full of Color and Joy

TTA BULLETIN

On 30th August 2025, the skies above Pegasus Reef came alive with vibrant colors and cheerful laughter as the Breezy Kite Festival took flight. Families, friends, and kite enthusiasts gathered together for a day filled with fun, creativity, and community spirit.

From children flying their very first kite to seasoned participants showcasing artistic creations, the festival created an atmosphere of pure excitement and wonder. Parents cheered, kids giggled, and the entire beachfront transformed into a



breathtaking canvas painted with soaring kites.



Discover the Thrill of New Beginnings This Festive Season at Four Seasons Resort Mauritius at Anahita

TTA BULLETIN

Framed by an island-inspired palette of dazzling turquoises and sunlit golds, “Our New Story” invites guests to embrace the thrill of discovery and the joy of celebration in a vibrant new chapter under the Mauritian sun. Following an extensive transformation, Four Seasons Resort Mauritius at Anahita will unveil an all-new look, feel and guest experience this November. The reimaged resort debuts seven brand-new dining venues, an expanded one-of-its-kind overwater Oseyan Spa, a completely redesigned beach concept, and enhanced kids’ and teens’ spaces — setting the stage for a magical 2025 Holiday season.

At the heart of the resort’s transformation is a reimaged culinary journey. Seven distinct dining venues will showcase flavours from around the world, each telling its own story. Guests can enjoy toes-in-the-sand sushi at Ti Pwason, and stand-off-fired delights at Angara, and starlit Asian creations with a modern Japanese twist at overwater Awase. Radici presents refined Italian festive menus curated by Chef Sergio Favata, while rotating pop-up breakfasts highlight the best of Asia, Italy and India. Adding a distinctly Mauritian flavour, the new Rum Library will offer curated tastings led by local rhumeric experts, where each sip is paired with stories that bring the island’s heritage to life.

The new Oseyan Spa offers treatments inspired by the island’s natural bounty and cultural traditions. Signature rituals include a sugar cane full body scrub, a detoxifying moringa wrap, and the nourishing finish of pure organic coconut oil — all enjoyed in a tranquil



water-framed sanctuary.

The coastline has also been transformed with a redesigned beach concept offering four unique areas. Quiet Beach provides a haven of calm, Lazy Beach encourages unhurried lounging, and Active Beach is a lively hub for games and water sports. For those seeking complete seclusion, the private enclave on Île aux Cerfs — home to La Plaz Beach Grill — delivers pristine sands and exclusive dining.

For younger travellers, newly upgraded kids’ and teens’ spaces set the stage for festive creativity and play. Seasonal activities will include tree-shaped cookie making, handmade ornament design and personalised card crafts, ensuring magical memories for every age.

Alongside these exciting new features, the festive season will continue to honour beloved traditions. Christmas Eve will present the choice of an elegant Italian feast at Radici or a lavish beachfront buffet beneath the stars. New Year’s Eve will sparkle with the “New Beginnings” celebration by the beach, complete with live entertainment, festive dining and island magic, while Awase offers an intimate, elegant overwater dining experience for those seeking a quieter welcome to 2026.

Days will be filled with activities that capture the beauty and adventure of Mauritius. Guests can snorkel with seahorses through protected mangroves, hike to hidden waterfalls, or join relaxed jogging sessions across the twin isles of Île aux Cerfs and Îlot Mangénic. A turquoise

Heritage Hotels & Resorts champions “Travel Heals” with CCC Bikeathon Partnership

TTA BULLETIN

Heritage Hotels & Resorts announced its partnership with the 1333 CCC Bikeathon “Ride to Save Lives”, reinforcing the Group’s commitment to supporting mental health initiatives in Sri Lanka.



nourished in body and mind.

As a leading hospitality group with resorts across Sri Lanka and beyond, Heritage has long been a

proponent of sustainability, culture, and community. Supporting the CCC Bikeathon is an extension of that ethos, aligning with the values of courage, compassion, and commitment, while lending strength to an initiative that gives thousands of Sri Lankans a voice, and more importantly, hope.

“Through this partnership, we are not only supporting a vital cause but also reaffirming our role as a corporate entity with a responsibility to society,” said Stasshani Jayawardena, Chairperson, Aitken Spence PLC. “Travel Heals is a philosophy we live by, and this collaboration allows us to extend its meaning far beyond our resorts, into the very communities we serve.”

Heritage Hotels & Resorts invites all Sri Lankans and travellers alike to support the Bikeathon, celebrate life, and embrace the healing power of travel.

Now in its 12th year, the CCC Bikeathon spans 1333 kilometres across 13 cities, culminating on World Suicide Prevention Day, 10 September. As the riders journey across the island, they will raise awareness of mental health and suicide prevention, while also experiencing the beauty and diversity of Sri Lanka — from its coastal roads to its lush inland landscapes.

For Heritage Hotels & Resorts, this partnership goes beyond sponsorship. It reflects the brand’s belief in the transformative power of travel — the ability to step away, discover something new, refresh one’s perspective, and find balance. At a time when conversations around mental wellbeing have become more urgent than ever, Heritage champions the idea that Travel Heals, offering spaces where guests can ground themselves, reconnect, and be

Move. Breathe. Thrive. Colombo’s Ultimate Gym and Wellness Space is at Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams

TTA BULLETIN

At Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Sri Lanka—Colombo’s iconic lifestyle destination—every moment is transformed, even your workout, into a memorable experience. Perched on Level 9, the wellness centre and gym provide a vibrant sanctuary where luxury meets lifestyle.



expert guidance, and an energizing atmosphere, the experience has earned glowing praise from guests who consistently commend the world-class facilities, attentive staff, and the unmistakable vibe that sets this space apart.

Designed with the modern traveller in mind, this dynamic space blends cutting-edge fitness technology with the tranquility of a high-end wellness retreat. Whether you are travelling for business or leisure, the Wellness Centre invites guests to elevate their stay with a perfect balance of energy and serenity.

What truly sets the gym apart is its team of certified trainers — professionals who combine expertise with genuine encouragement to create a personalized fitness experience. Whether you are refining your form, working toward specific goals, or simply looking for that extra push, the trainers are there to support every rep, every step of the way — ensuring you get the most out of every workout.

Beyond personalized training, the gym offers a comprehensive suite of wellness amenities designed to restore and recharge. Thoughtfully appointed locker rooms, soothing steam rooms, and revitalizing saunas create the perfect post-workout escape — striking the ideal balance between performance and relaxation. Coupled with cutting-edge equipment,

“Our wellness and fitness offerings are thoughtfully designed to be more than just a place to exercise — it is a dedicated space for holistic well-being, seamlessly integrated into the overall guest experience,” says Sanjiv Hulugalle, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Sri Lanka. “Our aim was to create an environment where maintaining one’s health feels intuitive and enjoyable — an extension of the elevated lifestyle Cinnamon Life promises.”

Whether you are in Colombo for business, leisure, or as a resident of the resort, Cinnamon Life’s Level 9 gym makes staying fit feel seamless, indulgent, and genuinely rewarding. Every visit offers the tools, guidance, and environment to turn everyday fitness into a lifestyle you choose.

For more information on membership and benefits, please contact +94 74 372 0395, email kurundu.fitness@cinnamonhotels.com, or visit the state-of-the-art facility on Level 9 at Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams.

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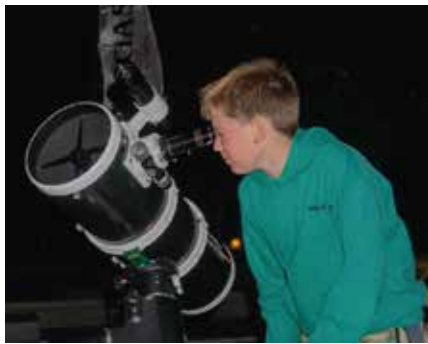
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ORGANISER

HOTELS

Magical Days & Starry Night

TTA BULLETIN

On 9th August, Pegasus Reef Hotel treated guests to an enchanting blend of sun-soaked adventures and starlit experiences, perfectly capturing the magic of the day-to-night transition. Guests enjoyed a stargazing session under clear skies, marveling at the constellations and the beauty of the cosmos, guided by our expert team. The day also featured a sun observation activity, where participants safely explored the wonders of our closest star, and an exciting water rocket session, adding a playful and interactive element for guests of all ages.



Imperial Hotel Celebrates 135 Years of Legacy and Welcomes a New Era in Japanese Hospitality

TTA BULLETIN

For 135 years, Imperial Hotel has been more than a place to stay—it has been a place where history unfolds. From hosting emperors and world leaders to welcoming artists, innovators, and travelers from around the globe, the Imperial Hotel, Ltd. has shaped the very definition of Japanese luxury hospitality. Its legacy is built not only on architectural brilliance and cultural reverence, but on the enduring spirit of omotenashi—Japan’s philosophy of heartfelt service.



Founded in 1890 by Eiichi Shibusawa and Kihachiro Okura under the direction of Foreign Minister Kaoru Inoue, the Imperial Hotel was envisioned as Japan’s private guest house for foreign dignitaries—a symbol of the nation’s modernization and global hospitality. It stands apart from other hotel companies in Japan through its deep-rooted heritage, meticulous attention to detail, and unwavering commitment to excellence.

Over the decades, it pioneered cultural innovations such as Japan’s first hotel wedding following the Great Kanto Earthquake, and introduced the country’s first buffet-style restaurant, the Imperial Viking, in 1958. Legendary guests include Marilyn Monroe, Charlie Chaplin, Helen Keller, and Babe Ruth, among many others. It has also served as headquarters for major international events such as the IMF and the World Bank Annual Meetings in 2012. These milestones have made Imperial Hotel not just a place to stay—but a place where history is made.

As the brand celebrates 135 years, it looks ahead to its next chapter: the opening of the Imperial Hotel, Kyoto in Spring 2026, its first new property in 30 years.

The Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, the brand’s flagship, opened in 1890 and has long been a beacon of hospitality in the heart of

the capital. Its most iconic chapter began in 1923, when Frank Lloyd Wright’s earthquake-resistant design famously withstood the Great Kanto Earthquake which

occurred on the very day that it opened. More than a feat of engineering, the Wright Imperial fused mythical beauty, organic materials, and cultural symbolism—including Haniwa-inspired ornamentation and a floating foundation—embodying Wright’s vision of architecture in harmony with nature and tradition. Known as the “Jewel of the Orient,” the Wright Imperial introduced Japan to hotel weddings and dinner shows, transforming the cultural landscape. Today, the hotel invites guests to experience its 909 rooms and suites, offering comfort and elegance even as it undergoes a visionary transformation as part of the Tokyo Cross Park Vision—an ambitious renewal that includes a striking new main building by Tsuyoshi Tane of ATTA – Atelier Tsuyoshi Tane Architects. Located near Ginza and the Imperial Palace, the hotel continues to host dignitaries and cultural icons.

In 2025, Imperial Hotel, Tokyo was awarded the VERIFIED™ Responsible Hospitality certification by Forbes Travel Guide, recognizing over 100 rigorous standards focused on environmental protection and guest well-being. The hotel earned this designation through initiatives such as reducing plastic use by reviewing in-room amenities, introducing vegan menu options across its dining venues and lounges, and implementing CO₂-free electricity throughout the property. It was also the first to receive the top-tier “5 Sakura” rating from the Sakura Quality An ESG Practice certification system, which evaluates 172 criteria aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This rating system is recognized by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), the leading international body for

Minor Hotels Opens Its First Property in Peru: nhow Lima

TTA BULLETIN

Minor Hotels, a global hotel owner and operator with over 640 properties across 57 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Africa, and the Indian Ocean, has officially opened its first hotel in Peru as part of its regional expansion plans. nhow Lima opened on 1 August and is set to transform the city’s accommodation, gastronomy, and entertainment scene with its disruptive and innovative approach.

nhow Lima offers 243 rooms across 13 floors, establishing itself as an innovative hotel that prioritises guest comfort and wellbeing. The hotel invites guests to enjoy a unique experience where creativity, local culture and avant-garde style converge. As part of the disruptive nhow brand’s family of lifestyle hotels, nhow Lima integrates art, design and technology throughout its spaces, offering sensory experiences that capture the essence of Lima and foster an authentic cultural connection with the city.

A culinary offering with local identity

Zónico, the fine dining restaurant located on the third floor of nhow Lima, has been designed to offer a culinary experience that celebrates the rich traditions of the

eight countries connected by the Amazon River. Blending regional ingredients with the essence of Peruvian produce, the restaurant presents a contemporary reinterpretation of Latin American cuisine, delivering an authentic, sophisticated culinary experience deeply rooted in local identity.

Located on the 13th floor, Pagano is an exclusive and sophisticated bar designed to become the new epicentre of Lima’s nightlife. Here, design, music and mixology combine to create a distinctive experience that reflects the city’s vibrant creative spirit.

Also located on the 13th floor is nhow Lima’s outdoor pool bar, a perfect spot for those looking to relax in a cosmopolitan, contemporary setting full of personality. It offers a vibrant experience that invites to enjoy Lima from above.

Prime Location and a Focus on MICE Excellence

Strategically located in Miraflores, one of Lima’s most vibrant and cosmopolitan districts, nhow Lima is just a 35-minute drive from Jorge Chávez International Airport and a few minutes from many of

Global Superstar Ne-Yo to Perform Live in Colombo This December

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka is set to mark a milestone in its journey as an emerging entertainment and events hub, with global R&B superstar Ne-Yo performing live in Colombo for the very first time. The three-time Grammy Award winner and internationally acclaimed songwriter will headline a spectacular concert at the Sugathadasa Outdoor Stadium on December 28, 2025, closing the year with a world-class celebration that places Colombo firmly on the global events calendar.

For years, Colombo has been viewed as a gateway to the island. Today, it is redefining itself as a destination in its own right—offering culture, gastronomy, shopping, nightlife, and now, large-scale international entertainment experiences. Hosting global icons like Ne-Yo underscores the city’s growing appeal as a vibrant urban hub for both leisure and business travelers.

Ne-Yo, who has enthralled millions worldwide with chart-topping hits such as So Sick, Miss Independent, and Closer, is expected to draw fans from across the region. His powerful voice, dynamic stage presence, and songwriting genius—responsible for hits performed by Rihanna, Beyoncé, Pitbull, and Celine Dion—have made him one of the most influential figures in modern R&B.

“I’ve always wanted to perform in Sri Lanka, and I’m excited to finally bring my music to the people there. It’s going to be a night to remember, and I can’t wait to share my biggest hits with my fans in Sri Lanka,” Ne-Yo shared ahead of the concert.

Tickets will go on sale on September 1, 2025, exclusively via PickMeApp, offering fans a range of experiences from General Admission to VIP and VVIP.

Presented by Brown Boy Presents, under the leadership of Co-Founder & CEO Amith Boteju, the concert is part of a broader vision to place Sri Lanka on the international entertainment map. “Bringing Ne-Yo to Colombo is not just about hosting a concert; it’s about showcasing Sri Lanka as a destination where world-class entertainment thrives. This is a turning point for the island’s events industry,” Boteju said.

The event is supported by Cinnamon Grand, Mastercard, Scope Cinemas, Emerging Media, PickMe, Wijeya Newspapers, and Artiste Connection, underscoring the collaborative effort to position Colombo as a global entertainment hub.

With world-class stage production, an open-air setting, and one of the biggest international performers of our time, Ne-Yo’s concert promises to be more than a show—it will be an unforgettable experience that highlights Colombo as a must-visit destination for events, culture, and entertainment in South Asia.



Hilton Yala Resort Marks Second Anniversary with Culture, Community, and Celebration

TTA BULLETIN

Hilton Yala Resort recently marked its second anniversary with a vibrant series of celebrations that brought together guests, team members, and the wider community. The milestone was honored over several days with curated guest experiences, engaging team member activities, and spiritual blessings that reflected the resort's ethos of blending wild beauty, cultural heritage, and heartfelt hospitality.



Hilton Yala's dedicated team members, who were recognized with a week of celebrations including karaoke nights, games, competitions, and social gatherings. These activities strengthened camaraderie and highlighted the resort's commitment to its people.

To mark the occasion, a traditional Pirith Ceremony was held to invoke blessings for the resort, its guests, and team members. The event included chanting led by monks and alms giving to 42 monks, symbolizing gratitude, prosperity, and renewal.

Hilton Yala Resort's anniversary was more than a celebration – it was a reflection of its journey and promise. By curating meaningful guest experiences, honoring its team, and embracing cultural traditions, the resort continues to embody the spirit of “where the wild meets wonder.”

Guests were treated to a thoughtfully designed program that combined relaxation, adventure, and local culture. Highlights included:

- Relax and Rejuvenate at eforea Spa – A week of wellness and soothing treatments.
- Cocktail Masterclass at Vanya Lounge & Bar – An interactive evening of mixology and mingling.
- Tracks and Signs Nature Walk – Guided explorations through Yala's wilderness and coastal landscapes.
- Local Craft Day – A celebration of regional artistry with local artisans.
- Discovering Sithulpauwa – A cultural journey to the historic temple site.
- Sip, Savor, and Soak at Sandali – An evening of fine beverages, music, and natural ambiance.

The second anniversary also paid tribute to

Malaysia Aviation Group Accelerates Growth with New Routes, Added Frequencies and Elevated In-Flight Experience

TTA BULLETIN

Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG) today unveiled significant enhancements to its network and product offering, reinforcing the Group's growth strategy and commitment to delivering greater connectivity and elevated travel experiences across its airlines. With new routes, added frequencies, and innovative in-flight dining, MAG continues to build momentum as it strengthens its regional presence while charting Malaysia Airlines' journey towards becoming one of the world's Top 10 global airlines by 2030.

Malaysia Airlines will commence daily flights between Kuala Lumpur and Chengdu Tianfu International Airport (TFU) beginning 9 January 2026, bringing the airline's network in Greater China to seven destinations. This expansion reinforces its presence in one of the region's fastest-growing markets for both business and leisure travel, further supported by the recent introduction of reciprocal visa-free entry between Malaysia and China. The airline currently operates flights to Beijing (PKX), Shanghai (PVG), Guangzhou (CAN), Xiamen (XMN), Hong Kong (HKG), and Taipei (TPE).

Meanwhile, Firefly will launch new jet services to Krabi (KBV), Siem Reap (SAI)



and Cebu (CEB) from Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KUL) Terminal 1 from November 2025 onwards. These additions strengthen Firefly's role in enhancing regional connectivity, providing travellers with seamless access to popular destinations across ASEAN, while supporting both tourism and business travel.

Datuk Captain Izham Ismail, Group Managing Director of Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG), said, “With these new routes and expanded frequencies, MAG is strengthening its role as the gateway to Asia and beyond, making it easier for travellers to discover top destinations across the region and further afield. At the same time, we remain focused on delivering a premium in-flight experience that reflects our commitment to Malaysian Hospitality. Innovations such as our new vegetarian satay is just one example of how we continue to innovate while staying true to our heritage, offering more variety to meet evolving customer expectations. With the networks we are expanding, the

The Chinese & Myanmar Food Festival at Shangri-La Colombo

TTA BULLETIN

This September, Shangri-La Colombo invites diners on a rare culinary journey, where the timeless artistry of Chinese cuisine meets the soulful authenticity of Myanmar's flavours. From 5 to 14 September 2025, Central Restaurant transforms into a vibrant dining stage, offering an unforgettable dinner buffet from 6.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m.

Our team of international gastronomic experts — Chef Su Machang and Chef Jasen from China, together with Chef San Myint Lwin from Myanmar — craft every dish into a flavour to remember, bringing the authentic spirit of their homelands to your table.

Guests can indulge in a feast that captures the very essence of these two cuisines: delicate dim sum, classic Kung Pao chicken, and the fiery depth of mapo tofu from China; alongside Myanmar's beloved mohinga, hearty Shan noodles, coconut-rich ohn no khao swè, crisp samosa salad, and comforting curries paired with fragrant rice and handmade noodles. Every dish tells a story — of heritage, flavour, and the enduring traditions that bring people together.



The Chinese & Myanmar Food Festival is more than an evening of dining – it is a cultural journey expressed through taste, spice, and artistry. Hosted within the elegant surrounds of Central Restaurant, the experience embodies Shangri-La's promise of refined hospitality and extraordinary global flavours.

Priced at LKR 9,350 nett per person, guests can also enjoy an exclusive 25% savings with Sampath Bank credit cards – the perfect occasion to gather with family and friends and savour this one-of-a-kind celebration.

A Deep Dive into Decadence: The journey of Emirates' Caviar from source to sky

TTA BULLETIN

From Persia to Poland, Emirates selects and serves some of the world's most premium Ossetra caviar for its First Class customers. With First Class flyers invited to savour unlimited amounts of the delicacy onboard, Emirates has noted an increase of more than 30% in caviar consumption, year on year. The route recording the highest levels of customers enjoying caviar are Emirates flights between Dubai and London, followed by flights to and from Dubai to Paris and Sydney, and then Moscow and Bangkok.

Celebrating the fine nature of the delicacy, Emirates has developed a signature caviar service ritual that is appreciated by First Class customers for its intentional reverence and respect for the gourmet treat. To ensure it is always an impeccable dining experience, Emirates invests significantly into storing and serving caviar correctly - even providing a dedicated chauffeur drive service to transport caviar to and from aircraft. Caviar is dispatched individually for each flight, and to maintain the cold chain - approximately 165 trips are carried out each day.

Emirates' refined ritual of caviar in the air Caviar is considered a delicacy for many reasons, including its rarity and cost, and the sensory experience it offers—an indulgence that has captivated connoisseurs for centuries. Harvested from the roe of sturgeon - each tiny, glistening bead holds a subtle complexity of taste: delicate yet bold, briny yet buttery, with a texture that melts on the tongue.



Onboard Emirates, First Class customers are invited to enjoy unlimited caviar,

served as a luxurious, mindful ritual that highlights the rarity of the delicacy. Emirates cabin crew first don pristine white gloves and lay a fresh linen tablecloth on the customer's table. A curated array of accoutrements are then placed on the cloth for the full caviar experience – crispy melba toast, soft blinis, egg yolk, egg white, chives, white onions, sour cream, and lemon. As is the tradition with fine caviar, diners are presented with a pure Mother of Pearl spoon so that the delicate taste is not tainted by oxidation from stainless steel utensils. Finally, an exclusive Emirates engraved caviar presentation bowl is placed in front of the customer, and the lid ceremoniously unveiled to reveal the glimmering aperitif.

Emirates serves caviar from the Acipenser baerii fish, commonly known as the Siberian sturgeon. Caviar from Acipenser baerii is medium-sized, ranging in colour from dark grey to brown or black with a smooth, clean taste with a delicate texture and mild briny flavour. This species of sturgeon is native to the major river systems that flow into the Arctic Ocean, including the Ob, Lena, and Yenisei rivers in Siberia. Siberian sturgeon is selected for caviar production due to its relatively fast growth and adaptability to aquaculture environments, sometimes growing up to 2 meters in length and weighing around 100 kg. This sturgeon matures more quickly than other species, typically producing

SriLankan Airlines Marks 46th Anniversary

TTA BULLETIN



SriLankan Airlines completes another journey around the sun on 1 September 2025, celebrating its 46th Anniversary by giving its valued customers more reasons to explore the world with special anniversary offers. A pioneer in the region, SriLankan Airlines has long been a true ambassador for Sri Lankan hospitality on the global stage. Local in spirit, global in operations and renowned for its award-winning service, the airline looks ahead to many more years of seamlessly connecting people, cultures and trade.

Spreading the cheer, customers can enjoy 20% off Business Class and 15% off Economy Class return fares to all online destinations when booked via the SriLankan Airlines website between 1 – 5 September '25. Members of the airline's loyalty programme, FlySmiLes, who book within the first two weeks of September will also earn 46% bonus miles, symbolising 46 years in the skies.

No anniversary celebration is complete without recognising the airline's own internal customers – its dedicated employ-

ees. Throughout September, SriLankan Airlines will host a series of special programmes for staff, including religious services to invoke blessings on the airline. Over the years, SriLankan Airlines has proven its versatility in an ever changing and challenging aviation landscape. Today, it remains one of the major international airlines from South Asia, having achieved numerous milestones and accolades along the way. In 2025 alone, SriLankan Airlines has garnered several prestigious awards including, Best People's Airline of the Year at the Hybiz TV Business Excellence Awards; Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier – South Asia at the PAX Readership Awards; Most Loved Brand in Aviation in LMD's Most Loved Brands; Silver in the Best Regional Airline category at the Share-Trip-Monitor Airline of the Year; and Best Airline for South Asia at the International Tourism Conclave and Travel Awards. For more details on anniversary offers, visit srilankan.com/en_uk/special-offers/promotion/46th-anniversary-promo

Emirates strengthens commercial leadership team with five senior appointments

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates has announced new appointments to its commercial leadership team as it ramps up its network, fleet and products for its next era of growth.



“Emirates stands at a pivotal moment in its evolution as we scale up our network and deepen our engagement across an increasingly

diverse range of markets and consumer demographics. This period of dynamic growth calls for leaders with the right commercial knowhow and the thinking to navigate our complex and evolving industry landscape, so that we can capitalise on emerging opportunities and cement our position as the airline of choice for global travellers. I'm particularly proud that two of the top roles will be led by UAE Nationals who have demonstrated their leadership excellence, and we're committed to building a robust pipeline of homegrown talent to drive our continued growth.”

Commercial Appointments

Matthew Scott will lead Emirates' Network Passenger Sales Development (NPSD) team as Senior Vice President, overseeing the airline's Global Sales & Leisure teams. He was previously Vice President of Cargo Pricing and Interline at Emirates SkyCargo. Matthew began his Emirates career with SkyCargo in 2018 and has more than 20 years' experience with international airlines holding key positions in passenger commercial operations, revenue optimisation and planning, including Head of Corporate and Leisure Sales and Head of Commercial Strategy. Emirates has also made the following senior appointments within its commercial team:

Abdulla Al Olama has been promoted to VP Regional Clusters for the Middle East

Among the team members assigned with new roles is Rashid Alardha, who has until recently served as Country Manager - Sri Lanka and Maldives. Rashid has been promoted to the role of Vice President Regional Clusters Sub-Saharan Africa. Rashid joined Emirates in 2009, and since then has gained extensive country management experience across eight countries in the Middle East, Africa, Far East, West Asia and Indian Ocean.

The newly created roles, which include Senior Vice President, Network Passenger Sales Development and Vice President for Passenger Sales – Regional Clusters will support the airline's regional growth and market expansion ambitions, drive integrated performance across markets and segments, as well as foster key corporate relationships to drive long-term passenger growth, build market share and revenue.

As part of the newly established commercial leadership structure, two seasoned Emiratis have been appointed to lead key market clusters. These strategic appointments reflect the airline's ongoing commitment to cultivate exceptional UAE National talent and develop the next generation of industry leaders.

Adnan Kazim, Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer, Emirates Airline commented on the recent appointments:

IndiGo Further Strengthens International Connectivity from Mumbai

TTA BULLETIN



IndiGo, India's preferred airline, has announced direct, four weekly flights connecting Mumbai to major Central Asian cities - Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and Almaty (Kazakhstan), effective September 1 and 2, 2025 respectively. This announcement follows the recent launch of IndiGo's direct flight on Mumbai-Tbilisi (Georgia) route, reinforcing the airline's commitment to strengthening connectivity from India's financial capital and developing it as a key aviation hub. IndiGo already operates direct flights from Delhi to Tashkent, Almaty and Tbilisi since 2023.

Mr. Vinay Malhotra, Head of Global Sales, IndiGo, said, “Building on the successful operations from New Delhi to Tbilisi, Almaty and Tashkent, we are pleased to now connect all these destinations with Mumbai. Recently, we have also commenced our long-haul flights from Mumbai to Manchester & Amsterdam,

marking our entry into Europe. With these, IndiGo will further strengthen connectivity from the country's financial capital to destinations within India, as well as across the globe. We hope that customers will enjoy flying to different parts of the world from Mumbai with India's preferred airline.”

These new launches offer customers the perfect opportunity to plan their getaways on a wider network with IndiGo. The flights commencing are available for sale and customers can book via our official website www.goIndiGo.in or through our mobile app.

Qatar Airways to Welcome The Red Sea to its Global Network

TTA BULLETIN



Qatar Airways announces the upcoming launch of operations at The Red Sea, Saudi Arabia with three weekly flights from 21 October 2025, making it the 12th destination in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to be served by the airline.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer, said: “Qatar Airways' addition of The Red Sea route to our global network is yet another example of our dedication to providing diverse destinations that the discerning global traveller demands. The Red Sea – our 12th destination in Saudi Arabia – offers a wide range of distinct and enriching Middle East experiences. With this announcement, these travel experiences are now accessible with the World's Best Airline through our award-winning hub – Hamad International Airport.”

Red Sea Global Group CEO, Mr. John Pagano, said: “The launch of these new flights with Qatar Airways is a significant step in our journey to establishing The Red Sea as a premier luxury destination on the world stage. As we continue to open more hotels and attractions, this route makes it easier than ever for travellers to experience unparalleled luxury, explore the rich local Saudi culture, and learn about our pioneering regenerative tourism approach.”

The new route is set to open greater regional connectivity and boost travel from Asia and Europe to Saudi Arabia, making Qatar Airways the only airline connecting The Red Sea to more than 170 global destinations. Additionally, the

World's Best Airline, as voted by Skytrax in 2025, operates more than 130 weekly flights across Saudi Arabia, offering passengers from six continents seamless access to the Kingdom's incredible destinations.

The Red Sea offers more than 90 pristine islands, rugged canyons, ancient landscapes, and one of the largest barrier reef systems in the world to travellers seeking wellness, adventure, history, and scenic getaways. It now counts five luxury hotels that are open and welcoming guests. This year Shura Island, the heart of The Red Sea, will begin opening the first of its 11 resorts, as well as an 18-hole championship golf course, dining and retail options, signature experiences and cultural programming.

The Red Sea International Airport is architecturally inspired by its desert environment. The airport aims to serve over a million passengers per year by 2030. Since its launch in 2023, the Red Sea International Airport has been operated by daa International.

Qatar Airways, a benchmark for excellence in the industry, remains a prominent leader in global connectivity and operates to over 170 destinations worldwide. Bookings can be made at: qatarairways.com or through the airline's mobile application.



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Set your soul free and experience the joys of slow living



Nestled amidst quaint tea hills and a majestic mountainscape, the Tea & Experience Factory - a premier hotel in Mandaramnuwara - lies at the heart of Sri Lanka's tea country. Steeped in rustic, old-world charm, our boutique hotel is one of the oldest tea factories in the region, dating back to the 1800s. An edifice frozen in time, it offers guests an authentic tea experience like no other.

Today, a scaled-down version of the original factory remains in operation. Stay with us and witness the magical journey of a humble tea leaf - from bush to brew - as you discover the timeless art of tea-making.



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