

INTO THE WILD

AIR INDIA

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VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 8 AIRINDIA.COM

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behind the camera to  
capture stunning shots

+

Bestselling author  
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his secrets

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# EDITOR'S NOTE



Ruddy shelduck  
flying in Nameri  
National Park,  
Assam

**W**e plan safaris, pack binoculars, keep the cameras ready, yet the moment we enter the jungle, we cede control. We are simply spectators. And that, perhaps, leads us to surreal moments—unplanned and unscripted.

Bollywood star Raveena Tandon talks about this in our Cover Story, sharing photos clicked by her, and reminiscing about the 'magic moment' when a tigress locked eyes with her for a second. It is a moment she has not forgotten. Photographer Koushik Chatterjee shares his experience of documenting Craig, one of the last 25 tuskers in East Africa, and Najin, one of the last two remaining female Northern white rhinoceroses in the world. Air India Captain Mike A Johnsingh witnessed one of the most coveted jungle experiences—the wildebeest migration in Africa—and he shares his awe-inspiring photos.

Across the globe from there, Alex Hatton, a dive expert, introduces us to the rich marine life of the Philippines. Plunging in further, join us as we take you on walking safaris, photography tours, and trekking in Norway to discover our stunning planet.

In Mind, we were privileged to talk to author Dan Brown about the inspiration behind his books and his deep love for music as he is back with the latest in the Robert Langdon series! While that has brought joy to fans, we gain new perspective on the pursuit of happiness in Copenhagen, where rooftops have undergone a change to become multi-use spaces like ski slopes and gyms. In Checklist, we take you to Vancouver to explore the city through food, while also showcasing Bengaluru's new attractions.

Last but not the least, a glimpse of the Business Class of the Airbus A350-900—a special experience. We remain committed to building Air India into a world-class, global airline with Indian warmth. Happy reading!

— **Namaste.ai** Editorial Team

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Raveena Tandon





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A leopard in Rajaji National Park and Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand

### Cover image courtesy

Sudhir Shivaram

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## → Koushik Chatterjee

@wildearthimages

An IT professional currently based in Bengaluru, Koushik is also a wildlife photographer who has spent over two decades chronicling India's wilderness. His photographs have appeared in Vogue, Kenya Tourism Board, Smithsonian Magazine, Outlook India, and more. Here, he documents his experience of tracking two of the world's most unique wild inhabitants in Kenya.

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## → Shalbha Sarda

@shalbhasarda

Chasing all things spatially clever worldwide, Shalbha is a Jaipur-based design and travel journalist with a knack for uncovering places that tell stories or dazzle with style and innovation—from the maximalist heritage of Rajasthan to sustainable chic in Copenhagen. She writes on how the latter's rooftops have been creatively converted to multi-use spaces.

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## ← Prakhar Khanna

@ParkyPrakhar

A Delhi-based journalist, Prakhar has been covering the ever-evolving world of consumer tech for over a decade. A digital nomad at heart, he mixes deadlines with travel, while looking for the best pizza spots wherever he lands. He usually carries one phone too many and his playlists are stacked with 2000s Bollywood tunes. He lists cutting-edge gadgets trending this festive season.

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## ← Alex Hatton

@diving\_squad\_

Currently based in Panglao, Bohol (the Philippines), Alex works as a scuba diving instructor with Charming Blue Dive Center, certifying new students and arranging dives to Napaling Reef, Balicasag Island, and beyond. He also runs *divingsquad.com*, a blog featuring tales from the deep, reviews of gear, and more. He introduces us to the rich marine life of the Philippines.

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## ← Amith Bangre

@amithbangre

A wildlife conservationist, naturalist, and hospitality specialist, Amith has spent over two decades in eco-tourism and wildlife education. He has pioneered conservation-led experiences across India's wilderness and has been recognised as 2023 TOFTigers Lodge Naturalist of the Year. He pens a guide on being a responsible visitor in the wild.

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# EFFORTLESS COOKING BEGINS HERE



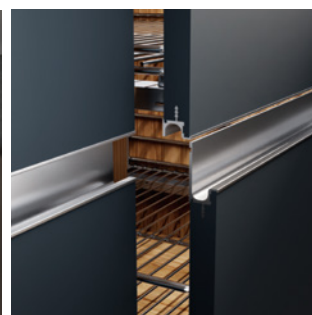
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# FOCUS

Stories that  
inspire and  
enrich

17 → FOOTPRINTS  
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# BEHIND THE LENS

Getting on the other side of the camera to shoot wildlife has taught me the virtue of patience and the power of stillness

words and photographs by  
**Raveena Tandon**





**T**he first time I felt that 'magic moment' was in Ranthambore National Park. I captured a tigress walking through the early morning mist, and her eyes locked with mine for a second. That image is still etched in my heart.

I have always had a passion for shooting wildlife. It has always been there, I suppose, like a quiet river flowing underneath. No one in my family tree has had this hobby. My father, being a filmmaker, had a keen visual sense. I grew up around cameras and sets, which perhaps sparked something in me early on. But wildlife photography, I discovered on my own. I have loved nature ever since I was a child, enjoying the beauty of the trees, the birds, and the open skies. But it was only much later, after spending time in sanctuaries and forests, that I picked up the camera.

### **In the Wild**

There is something meditative about being behind the lens, observing without interfering. I feel grounded. There is a sense of oneness with the environment; all distractions simply fade away. It is just you, your subject, and that moment, deeply fulfilling. I have understood the moods of natural light over the years. Understanding how natural light falls early morning, golden hour shots, and staying silent; letting the forest breathe without your presence disrupting it—that is the key to shooting in the wild.

*The actor has loved nature since she was a child but picked up the camera much later*

**FACING PAGE**  
*Tandon shot this handsome 'bloke' at the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan*



### IN PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

"On my bucket list are the dream destinations of Borneo and Madagascar. The biodiversity there is surreal. I would love to photograph orangutans in the wild someday. Another animal on my wish list is the rare, mysterious, and elusive clouded leopard. Spotting one would be a dream come true."

There have been many special moments marking my encounters in the forests. Once in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, I waited nearly seven hours in the sweltering heat to spot a tigress with her cubs. I was not alone—my guide and a fellow enthusiast were there but we hardly spoke. It was just the hum of nature and then, finally, a silent emergence. Simply magical. There have been times when I have been so transfixed by the sight of a wild animal that I have forgotten to take a shot. Sometimes, the moment

is too sacred to interrupt with a click. You just absorb that moment; let it fill you up. When I had a silent eye contact with a leopard on a tree, I did not even lift my camera. Some moments are just meant to be lived.

There have been experiences that have been so unique and unforgettable in their own way—like the sight of a sloth bear chasing away a tiger in the buffer zone of the Satpura Tiger Reserve and National Park. That is not something you see every day. The forest never ceases to surprise and delight. From Indian forests

like Kanha, Bandhavgarh, and Kaziranga (all three are both a Tiger Reserve and a National Park) to Masai Mara National Reserve in Kenya, every place has its own magic. But Ladakh stands out, perhaps because spotting a snow leopard there felt like a true blessing from nature.

My favourite click, however, is that of a tigress crossing a river in monsoon light at Pench Tiger Reserve and National Park. The water ripples, the low clouds, her muscles flexing—it was poetry in motion.



Once, I sat on the special seat on the bumper of the safari jeep, in South Africa, and confronted a pride of lionesses. There were four of them, and I had no guard, no shield. Just me, sitting right there while they stared straight at me, unflinching. When a wild animal looks at you like that, it looks through you. Through your eyes, your skull, and straight into your soul. It is the piercing, primal stare. As brave as I may seem, I could not bring myself to look back. I kept praying inwardly, "God, please do not let me be the next snack." Yet, even with that fear, it was the most surreal, goosebump-inducing experience of my life.

### Kit Up

I have a few friends who share this love for wildlife photography, and we often exchange notes or plan trips together. I am a part of a couple of low-key online forums and groups where passionate amateurs and professionals connect.

Honestly, I am not a gadget hoarder, but I do invest in gear that supports my work meaningfully. In terms of equipment, I use a professional DSLR with a long-zoom lens for

most of my photography. Depending on the subject, I sometimes switch to a mirrorless camera. I also use my phone occasionally; it is surprisingly effective for landscapes and capturing spontaneous moments.

Recently, I added a lightweight carbon fibre tripod to my kitty—it makes trekking and set-ups much easier in the wild. My photography caddy also includes a field monitor for reviewing footage.

I enjoy revisiting my old photographs now and then to learn what I could have done differently. I also follow the works of brilliant photographers



*This is the artiste's favourite click of a Sambar in Kanha, Madhya Pradesh; (inset) She photographed this pair of Asian green bee-eaters on her maiden visit to Kanha.*

**FACING PAGE**  
*The actor captured a tender moment between a mother tiger and her cubs in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra*





*This leopard was snapped by Tandon at the Pench Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh*

from around the world—it is very inspiring. Most importantly, I keep going back to the wild. That is where you evolve. As a wildlife photographer, I am mostly self-taught, though I have had wonderful conversations with talented photographers over the years. You learn a lot by observing, experimenting, and even making mistakes.

Nature though, is the best teacher—she has taught me patience, timing, and perspective. I have learnt to respect time, nature, and silence. Life is not always about rushing. It is about finding joy in stillness, in things that do not speak but say so much. In the forest, every rustle, every bird call has meaning. You begin to listen more and speak less, which I think is a beautiful way to live.

### Photo Finish

I often exhibit my photographs for charity, as I did recently for the Save Earth Foundation. My photographs were sold, with all proceeds going to causes close to my heart.

To all those who love taking to the lens in the forest, all I will say is—respect the wild. Do not chase the shot, let it come to you. Be patient, stay ethical, and always leave the forest the way you found it, untouched.

— As told to  
**Shilpi Madan**



**THERE IS SOMETHING MEDITATIVE ABOUT BEING BEHIND THE LENS, OBSERVING WITHOUT INTERFERING. I FEEL GROUNDED.**



# THE LAST OF THEIR KIND

Tracking one of the world's biggest tuskers and one of the last Northern white rhinos was an astounding experience

words and photographs by  
**Koushik Chatterjee**



*Craig is one of the biggest tuskers in the world; his tusks weigh nearly 100lb (around 45.3kg) each*

The air was still. Not a leaf stirred. It was in the early hours of the morning at the Kimana sanctuary (adjacent to Kenya's Amboseli National Park), around 5am, on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2025, when I waited, determinedly yet patiently, with bated breath, camera in hand. All I could hear was a steady rhythm of dried leaves crunching, the sound intensifying and drawing closer with every passing second, till it came to a deafening pause. And then he emerged, barely four feet away from me, in full glory—ears gently flapping, trunk swaying, owning every piece of land he stepped on—Craig. Recovering from a few seconds of being flabbergasted, I did what I came to do, capture this gentle giant in my lens.

Craig is one of the last 25 tuskers remaining in East Africa. His tusks, weighing nearly 100lb each (approximately 45.3kg), as per the latest records, documented on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025, are long and symmetrical, curving slightly outward and almost touching the ground. They are also remarkably even, unlike some others whose tusks are mismatched.

I first chanced upon Craig in one of celebrated British photographer David Yarrow's galleries, and I knew I had to see him in real life. But the journey of tracking him began in 2024, with me travelling





**TOP AND BOTTOM**  
Najin is one of the two remaining Northern white rhinoceroses in the world; The author (right) with Jeremy, Najin's caretaker.

## GETTING THERE

Fly to Nairobi from Mumbai with Air India's Codeshare Partner Kenya Airways.

to Kenya and interacting with the local Masai people, and making an initial, but rather unsuccessful, attempt to photograph him. But this year, all efforts bore fruit... it is a feeling that cannot be put in words.

This stupendous success, however, would not have been possible without the unwavering and quick-footed support of two individuals. David, a local Masai, who not

only tracked Craig this time around but also informed me well before time and advised me on how best to proceed, and Anthony, my guide.

The next day, I made my way to Ol Pejeta Conservancy on a quest to photograph one of the last two remaining female Northern white rhinoceroses in the world—Najin. My point of contact was my friend, Jeremy Kimathi, a man who has dedicated the last 16 years of his life (and continues to) caring for Najin and her daughter, Fatu.

By the time we reached Ol Pejeta Conservancy on 4<sup>th</sup> August, Jeremy had set everything in place and immediately whisked my entire team off to the protected area where these two majestic and calm creatures roamed free. Photographing Najin was a breeze but that moment, being there... being so incredibly close to a species so strong yet

so critically endangered, is overwhelmingly life-altering.

Just like Yarrow's work piqued my interest in Craig, the extensive conservation work of Ami Vitale (an acclaimed photographer and filmmaker) on Najin had me dig deeper into the latter—her history and family tree—which culminated in me being deeply intrigued with the Northern white rhinoceroses.

Two days. Two of the world's most precious wild inhabitants. One unbelievable adventure. Staggering hours of research and seeing photos paled in comparison to watching these animals with my own eyes.

If you ask me to sum up the experience, I would only be able to leave you with this—astounding. Nature has a very beautiful way of whispering to you to stay grounded, to be one with her and all her children... all you have to do, is listen.

— As told to **Shrabasti Anindita Mallik**



# IN DEEP WATERS

The Philippines is home to some of the most vibrant marine ecology in the world

words by **Alex Hatton**

*The Philippines offers great scuba options for beginners and advanced divers*

**H**ave you come across an underwater landscape that prompted you to re-evaluate your life? That was my reaction after I arrived in the Philippines in 2023. I had quit my job in 2018 as an ecologist in England to be a scuba diving travel blogger, and after travelling the world (Thailand, Costa Rica, Ireland, etc.), I fell in love with Bohol Island, especially Panglao, and settled there to obtain my scuba diving instructor licence.

One of the things I love about diving in the Philippines is the sheer variety of experiences one can have. One of the most special dive locations is Coron, in north Palawan (around 300km from

Manila), where 10 sunken Japanese warships from World War II form a unique marine environment. The ships are covered in a lot of hard coral and are used as shelter by turtles and other marine life like batfish, sardines, and crabs. These ships sank in shallow waters and divers can easily penetrate them through narrow gaps. You can cruise through cabins and decks as well as surface in a large underwater air pocket. It is akin to being in a James Bond movie. A half-day trip from Coron takes you to a site where you can hope to spot dugongs, a marine animal that resembles a manatee. These are an elusive species to spot in the wild.

Malapascua, a tiny island

off the northern tip of Cebu, is where rare marine specimens, like the thresher sharks, live. It is one of the few places in the world with guaranteed sightings. These sharks have an upper tail lobe as long as their entire body, and they use the tail to whip and stun fish for food. If lucky, one can also spot tiger sharks here. Alternatively, one can also make a half day trip to the nearby Gato island, where you can swim through an underwater tunnel to see small crustaceans and molluscs, and perhaps even elusive pygmy sea horses hiding amid sea fans.

Another unique underwater terrain is the silty seabed around Dumaguete, on the south-east coast of Negros island.

## GETTING THERE

Air India flies non-stop to Manila from Delhi.





**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**  
One can spot turtles in many marine areas; Panglao island is a good dive location for beginners; Colour-changing flamboyant cuttlefish; Barracudas can be spotted in coral reefs.

When you dive here, you feel like you are suspended above a wasteland of silt and sand. But look closer and you can observe many macro critters, including sea horses, pygmy frog fish, *nudibranch* (spectacularly-coloured sea slugs), the venomous blue ring octopus, and colour-changing venomous flamboyant cuttlefish. The last one, especially, is amazing because it not only changes colours and patterns but also the textures of its skin (from smooth to knobbly, and gristly, and back again). It really puts on the most incredible display.

Siquijor, both the land and the reef around it, is another special destination. This is locally called the 'Island of Witches' because of its deep-rooted tradition of folk healing and witchcraft that blends Catholicism with shamanistic practices and folk medicine. Underwater, it is a location within an archipelago, surrounded by the Visayas islands, and therefore, is sheltered from the many typhoons that strike the Philippines. This has resulted in exceptionally healthy coral reefs; you

can spot vibrant corals like staghorn, whip, and cherry blossom here. Living amidst these are many *nudibranch*, turtles, and reef fish, whilst huge schools of jacks (aka *trevallies*), a large pelagic fish, can be seen in the open waters nearby.

My hometown, Bohol province, is just a short ferry trip from Siquijor and Dumaguete. It is perhaps the most popular upcoming dive destination in all of the Philippines. One can spot vast schools of fish—from massive balls of tiny sardines and huge tornados of barracuda to immense swarms of jacks—around the nearby Balicasag Island

and Napaling Reef. The tourist hub here is Panglao, which is home to all manner of life, including healthy corals, turtles, sea snakes, cuttlefish, frog fish, and octopus. The advantage of Panglao is that it is an easy dive location for beginners, making it a great place to get scuba certified.

The dive sites of the Philippines compare quite favourably to other marine areas in Asia, like Thailand or Bali. They are more off the beaten track, and so, you will find fewer divers here, which always makes for a better experience.

— As told to  
**Mignonne Dsouza**

### DIVING TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

- Practise slow breathing to reduce air consumption under water, which helps you dive longer.
- Get your own mask. A proper fit means no leaks or fog.
- Do your e-learning earlier. Most programmes can send you the theory section of The Open Water Diver course online.



# CHECKLIST

Everything worth checking out

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# 8 dishes TO TRY IN VANCOUVER



Embark on an epicurean journey in this bustling west coast seaport in Canada's British Columbia

words by **Nupur Singh**

## ← **BRITISH COLUMBIA OYSTERS**

On my first oyster trail here, I discovered that an oyster's location is a key factor. This phenomenon, known as 'merroir', gives each a unique flavour profile based on where it grew—in an inlet, a cove or a bay. In the Baynes Sound, I love Fanny Bay oysters for their plump, sugary, and mineral finish, while I prize Kusshi for its buttery, creamy texture. From the Jervis Inlet, I found the Royal Miyagi to be delightful for its kiwi-like aftertaste. However, my favourite is the Pacific Jewel from the Okeover Inlet, with a sparkly finishing note. Oyster purists say they are best enjoyed as is, but I like mine with horseradish, lemon drizzle or *mignonette*.

**Where to try it:** Joe Fortes Seafood & Chop House, 777 Thurlow Street

## → **CHICKEN SOUVLAKI WRAPS**

A souvlaki is an iconic Greek street food, meaning 'little skewer'. The charcoal-grilled aroma caught me right off the street and before I knew it, I was perched on a high chair in anticipation. What came next did not disappoint. The seasoned chunks of chicken were grilled to tender, juicy, and crispy perfection, and all of this was gift-wrapped in a bed of pita with chubby fries and a drizzle of tzatziki, taking it to the next level.

**Where to try it:** Skewers Souvlaki Pita Bar, 26 Powell Street





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### ➔ GRILLED CHEESE

In a city where grey skies and rain are sometimes a way of life, the sizzle of butter in the pan is a golden promise. This simple but ever-so-comforting grilled cheese, on whole wheat sourdough and stuffed with rich, smoked applewood cheddar, is a gooey, cheesy, warm hug on a plate that I did not know I needed. Cheese lovers should try the Comox Brie, made by Natural Pastures Cheese Company on Vancouver Island. A celebrated Canadian cheese known for its buttery ivory colour and creamy texture, it has won many accolades, and pairs delightfully with nuts, crackers, fruit preserves, and honey.

**Where to try it:** A Bread Affair, 1680 Johnston Street

### ➔ WILD PACIFIC SALMON

Only a few things in life come as close to perfection as a flawlessly-grilled wild Pacific salmon. With its flaky yet incredibly moist flesh and a rich, bold flavour, this is a meal I can eat anytime. Pair it with Chardonnay or a wheat beer. Try the spectacular 33 Acres of Sunshine, a French-style wheat beer with a hazy blonde and a dreamy finish of orange peel, coriander, and anise seed.

**Where to try it:** Carlino restaurant, 1115 Alberni Street



### ➔ GREAT B.C. ROLL

This was created in Vancouver by Chef Hidekazu Tojo in the 1970s, to appeal to Western palates not used to eating raw fish. He used barbecued salmon for an appealing flavour. The crunchy roll is prepared in the *uramaki* style, with the rice on the outside and cucumber, *nori* (seaweed) on the inside, a technique Tojo pioneered to hide the seaweed. To finish, a teriyaki glaze is brushed on.

**Where to try it:** Tojo Restaurant, 1133 W Broadway



### GETTING THERE

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### ➔ TOM YUM KUNG

This delightful dish instantly transported me back to my once-lived life in Bangkok, where there is always room for another bowl.

Prepared with prawns, *kaffir* lime, lemongrass, and *galangal*, this fragrant soup is a delicious argument between fiery chillies and sour lime. Every spoonful was a reminder that life, like this soup, is always better with a little spice, if not a lot of drama.

**Where to try it:** Thai Away Home, 1081 Granville Street



### ← NANAIMO BAR

I do not know if this is the best dessert in the world, but I do not want to find another. A no-bake treat, its smooth custard buttercream filling is sandwiched between a mouthwatering dark chocolate ganache and a lightly crunchy coconut and chocolate layer on the bottom. This taste is a reminder of the true north, making it arguably the best edible souvenir.

**Where to try it:** Northern Bars, Granville Island Public Market (The bright yellow packaging box features illustrations of iconic Vancouver landmarks by designer David Arias)



### ➔ CEVICHE CLASICO

The fresh, raw fish, 'cooked' in a zesty marinade of lime, *aji limo*, corn, and red onion, with a hint of cilantro, created a remarkable texture. I dug in, and every morsel was a delightful dance of savoury and spicy flavours—a playfully refreshing and sophisticatedly complex sensory experience of the sea.

**Where to try it:** Suyu Modern Peruvian (Michelin Guide), 3475 Main Street







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# SEASON TIME

Attend a concert, take in some art, and get spooked




 **IN CONCERT**

## DILJIT DOSANJH AURA TOUR

 **Sydney, Australia**

26<sup>th</sup> October

Get ready to party with the Punjabi singer-actor at CommBank Stadium. Dosanjh, known for hits like *G.O.A.T.*, *Lover*, and *Proper Patola*, will be the first Indian artiste to headline stadium shows in Australia. Other stops in the country would include Melbourne, Perth, and Adelaide.

 [commbankstadium.com.au](http://commbankstadium.com.au)



**ART SHOW**

## CHROMATIC CURRENTS

 **Delhi, India**

Till 30<sup>th</sup> October

The India solo debut of Singaporean artist Kumari Nahappan at Pristine Contemporary draws on the ancient spice routes that connected India and Southeast Asia, tracing the migration of nutmeg, mace, and pepper alongside myths, iconography, and devotional traditions, presented via vibrant canvases and sculptures.



[gallerypristine.com](http://gallerypristine.com)



**FEAR FACTOR**

## MICKEY'S NOT-SO-SCARY HALLOWEEN PARTY

 **Florida, USA**

2<sup>nd</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> October

The Magic Kingdom park will transform into a Halloween-themed wonderland, featuring events like a Mickey and Minnie Mouse meet-and-greet at Town Square Theater and Zom-Beatz Bash, a dance party inspired by the film *ZOMBIES 4: Dawn of the Vampires* (2025).

 [disneyworld.disney.go.com](http://disneyworld.disney.go.com)





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## ON THE RADAR



### AMSTERDAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

📍 **Amsterdam, the Netherlands**  
25<sup>th</sup> October

Held at the Johan Cruijff Arena, this year's line-up features Armin van Buuren and Hardwell.

[amf-festival.com](http://amf-festival.com)



### VOICES OF DIVERSITY

📍 **Delhi, India**  
9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> October

This music festival at Sunder Nursery will feature Ankur Tewari and the Ghalat Family, among others.

[knma.in](http://knma.in)



### SERPENTI INFINITO

📍 **Mumbai, India**  
2<sup>nd</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> October

Bvlgari unveils its iconic Serpenti symbol in a multi-sensory exhibit at the Art House.

[nmacc.com](http://nmacc.com)

## SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX



📍 **Singapore**  
3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> October

Besides the main race, visitors can expect to see retro car showcases, LED light installations, as well as participate in late-night hawker trails and Orchard Road shopping events. The event will conclude with a concert by Elton John.

[singaporegp.sg](http://singaporegp.sg)



AMAZING RUN

## BANK OF AMERICA CHICAGO MARATHON

📍 **Chicago, USA**  
12<sup>th</sup> October

With start and finish lines in Grant Park, the event winds through 29 neighbourhoods and concludes with the 27<sup>th</sup> Mile Post-Race Party in Butler Field, near Columbus Drive and Jackson Drive. This outdoor celebration will feature music from a Chicago-based DJ along with a wide selection of food and beverages.

[chicagomarathon.com](http://chicagomarathon.com)



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# CUTTING EDGE

Whether for yourself or to gift,  
these gadgets score big

words by **Prakhar Khanna**

## ➔ **NOTHING HEADPHONE (1)**

A pair of headphones is seldom designed to be eye-catching yet sound good, but this is what the new Nothing product is all about. It is tuned by KEF for an immersive sound experience and features powerful Active Noise Cancellation (ANC) performance. This model trades the new-gen touch controls for a refreshingly new button control system that houses a roller and a paddle. The product is everything you would want from a pair of wireless ANC headphones while also being comfortable and stylish.

**Why buy:** Head-turning design  
US\$299 (approximately)



## ➔ **APPLE IPHONE 17**

This is the closest a base iPhone has been to its Pro sibling. From a 120Hz ProMotion screen with slim bezels to Ceramic Shield 2 build with a 7-layer anti-reflective coating, it has got it all. If that is not enough, the 17 now starts at 256GB storage and shares a similar camera setup as the Pros—48MP main and 48MP ultrawide cameras, alongside an upgraded 18MP Center Stage selfie shooter. On the front, you can now record ultra-stabilised videos, and it will automatically adjust framing for the best shot.

**Why buy:** The best iPhone upgrade in years  
US\$799 (starting price)





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### ➔ SAMSUNG GALAXY Z FOLD 7

This is the folding phone of the year. It is almost as slim as the one in your pocket, but it unfolds into a tablet. At 215gm, it is also lighter than the latest iPhone 17 Pro Max. Samsung fixed the cover screen aspect ratio, decreased crease depth, improved camera performance, and fine-tuned the Qualcomm processor for maximum efficiency. Additionally, it packs the most complete suite of AI features to make your life easier, topped by an enjoyable user experience. You no longer need to compromise on product quality to get the novelty of a foldable.

**Why buy:** Foldable perfection  
US\$1,999 (starting price)



### ➔ GOOGLE PIXEL BUDS PRO 2

These are the most comfortable travel earbuds you can buy right now. They offer balanced sound with strong ANC, so you can enjoy your favourite music while minimising airplane noise. And they fit the ear canal extremely well. You can fall asleep on your journey, go for a run or headbang to metal music without worrying about the earbuds falling out. The egg-shaped case is easy to carry and provides long-lasting battery life.

**Why buy:** All-day comfort  
US\$179 (approximately)



### ⬇️ SONY ULT FIELD 5

This portable party speaker delivers great sound with a hefty bass response, especially if you turn on ULT Mode 2. If you want to feel the beats at your party, this is the speaker. You cannot customise the ULT presets but the 10-band EQ helps. It comes with a shoulder strap to make it easy to carry around. This speaker is all about set-and-play on the go with no adjustment required.

**Why buy:** Powerful sound in a portable design  
US\$330 (approximately)



### ⬆️ ONEPLUS PAD 3

A big-screen entertainment device that does not compromise on power or usability is hard to find but this product gets it right. You get a 13.2-inch sharp screen, paired with 8 speakers for an immersive experience. It relies on the flagship Qualcomm processor with 12GB of RAM and an industry-leading multitasking experience. It is an all-rounder tablet; ideal for both work and play.

**Why buy:** Entertainment powerhouse  
US\$699 (approximately)







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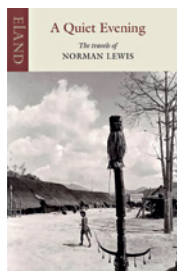






# TOP FIVE READS

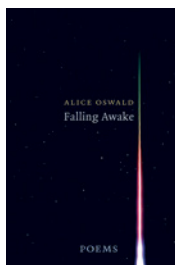
Novelist **Philip Marsden** on the books that he enjoys reading the most, and why



**A QUIET EVENING**  
(Norman Lewis)

Penned by a great travel writer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it portrays, with dry wit and courage, the stranger corners of the world.

*Eland Publishing; ₹3,000*



**FALLING AWAKE**  
(Alice Oswald)

Oswald is a brilliant poet. Her depictions of the natural world are both piercing and powerful.

*W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.*

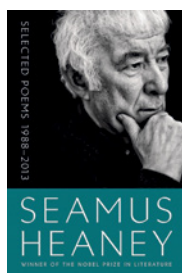
*₹4,832*



**FAUST**  
(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

I admire how this play narrates the story of the modern man.

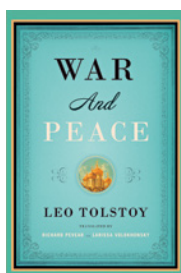
*Bantam Classics; ₹700*



**SELECTED POEMS**  
(Seamus Heaney)

He is able to take you into a moment and open your heart.

*Farrar, Straus and Giroux; ₹1,344*



**WAR AND PEACE**  
(Leo Tolstoy)

This book just has the whole world in it. And I re-read it every chance I get.

*Vintage; ₹1,922*

## NEW ON THE SHELF



**CONQUER**  
(Srijita Chakraborty)

It introduces readers, especially the young ones, to some of the world's most celebrated individuals, including Jane Goodall and Dr BR Ambedkar.

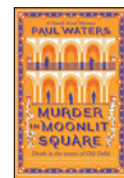
*Rupa Publications India; ₹295*



**WORK LIKE A MONK**  
(Shoukei Matsumoto)

From a Buddhist monk comes this read on what makes work meaningful—from embracing simplicity to understanding the importance of daily rituals.

*Simon & Schuster; ₹599*



**MURDER IN MOONLIT SQUARE**  
(Paul Waters)

Join Sister Agatha and hotelier Avtar Mehta as they race against time, the police, and a mysterious villain to save Christmas in the heart of Delhi.

*Penguin Random House India ₹440*



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# A DIFFERENT VIBE

Discover everything that's new and happening at the 'garden city'  
Bengaluru, where culture meets innovation

words by **Anita Rao Kashi**

🕒 07:30AM

## **Morning stop**

📍 National Military Memorial

A lush green space with expansive greenery, this park is part tribute and part testament to Bengaluru's moniker of 'the garden city'. An imposing 75-foot (approximately) obelisk pays homage to martyrs of the Indian Army.

🕒 10:00AM

## **Intellectual pursuits**

📍 Science Gallery Bengaluru

An interactive and contemporary space for research-based engagement, the institution (one of the city's latest additions) is guaranteed to give one's grey matter a healthy workout. An ongoing exhibition, *Calorie*, which includes workshops, film screenings, and lectures, will run till July 2026.

🕒 1:00PM

## **Kannadiga comfort**

📍 Bengaluru Oota Company

Get ready for a feast that is evocative of earthy Karnataka. Serving Gowda and Mangalorean cuisines, this tasting room offers an exclusive *mane-style* (homestyle) dining experience. Seats, however, need to be booked a day in advance.





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**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP**  
Mannheim Craft Brewery; Sabha is housed in a 160-year-old structure; Bengaluru Oota Company's food selection; Science Gallery Bengaluru.



## GETTING THERE

Air India flies non-stop to Bengaluru from Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Chennai.



## STYLISH STAYS

### 1/ Taj West End

This is quintessential Bengaluru with lush greenery, colonial charm, and impeccable service. Lounge at the Blue Bar or indulge in Vietnamese fare at Blue Ginger.

### 2/ The Paul Bangalore

Tucked away in the leafy lanes of Domlur, this boutique hotel offers warm, personalised service. It boasts an Irish microbrewery, and three specialty restaurants that individually serve Kerala, Mughlai, and European fare.

### 3/ Adarsh Hamilton

Located in a serene environment close to the CBD, its clean and geometric exterior contrasts with the effortless elegance and modernity inside. Plush, expansive rooms ensure that guests have a comfortable stay.

🕒 02:30PM

### Art swirl

📍 Museum of Art & Photography (MAP)

One of the city's highly-acclaimed art spaces, MAP beautifully showcases India's artistic legacy alongside global creativity, blending tradition with technology. It houses thousands of works that span several genres.

🕒 04:30PM

### Cultural immersion

📍 Sabha Blr

A 160-year-old building that has been meticulously restored, this arts and crafts community centre is the city's current buzzword in culture. It is a vibrant hub for conversations and performances, along with live events, workshops, exhibitions, and a café—all juxtaposing heritage with creativity. Something is always happening here.

🕒 07:00PM

### Karnataka vibes

📍 Cauvery Arts and Crafts Emporium

At the intersection of MG Road and Brigade Road, Cauvery showcases the state's handicrafts, including sandalwood artefacts, Channapatna toys, sandalwood and eucalyptus oil, *bidriware* trinkets, and even local silks. Ideal for souvenirs.

🕒 10:00PM

### Curtain call

📍 Mannheim Craft Brewery

After a day's worth of wanderings and musings, sample the other thing that makes Bengaluru tick—beer. Kick back at this expansive brewery, which serves a bold interpretation of craft beer that is rooted in the German tradition and married to the country's evolving palate. With a wide selection of brews on tap, this is the perfect way to end the day.





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# ALL IN VOGUE

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## OTOKI IS NOW IN MUMBAI

**Why:** For a true taste of Japanese flavours in the city. It is inspired by the convivial spirit of the country's traditional *izakayas* and prepares fare with an ingredient-first philosophy, with minimal intervention.

**Where:** Colaba, Mumbai **Recommendations:** Prawn *Okonomiyaki*, Seafood *Chirashi*, Asparagus *Nigiri*, Vegetarian *Miso Ramen*, Katsuo *Tataki*

## IN A CLICK

You do not need to visit a Sabyasachi Mukherjee store the next time you want to buy jewels from the brand. The designer has launched a digital boutique with Tata CLiQ Luxury that boasts a curated collection of jewellery crafted in 18-carat gold, using diamonds, pearls, and gemstones.

## A FESTIVE ODE

Drawing inspiration from the golden age of Bollywood, trueBrowns has launched its latest collective, *Sitara*, as a homage to the icons of the silver screen. The ensembles are created in luxury fabrics like brocade and muslin silk, featuring intricate techniques of digital and foil printing. The range blends deep jewel tones with radiant brights and shimmering metallics.



All images courtesy respective brands





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### ↑ ALL THAT GLITTERS

Dazzle in the festive season with exquisite diamond pieces from Zoya (a House of Tata boutique). Necklaces, earring, bangles, and rings from their latest collection, *Whispers from the Valley*, are crafted with diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, South Sea pearls, and other precious gems.



### ← THE FINER TOUCHES

Luxury home decor brand VIYA by Vikram Goyal has launched its latest collection aimed for the upcoming festive season. The selection—featuring decorative candelabras, minimalistic glass candles, and gorgeous candle stands, along with hand-embroidered napkins—embodies the spirit of celebration through refined artistry and exquisite detailing.

### → MANAM'S FESTIVE TREATS

**Why:** To make your Diwali celebrations sweeter. Share with friends or gift it to loved ones; these delectables are sure to strengthen bonds and widen smiles.

**Where:** Stores in Delhi and Hyderabad, or online at [manamchocolate.com](http://manamchocolate.com)

**Highlights:** 12-, 24-, and 26-piece boxes, Celebration Cake in Dark Chocolate Raspberry and Coconut Lemon Custard flavours



### ↓ CARBONE OPENS IN DUBAI

**Why:** For a taste of a New York-style Italian menu in the UAE, from one of the most celebrated Italian restaurants in America. **Where:** *Atlantis The Royal*  
**Recommendation:** *Caesar alla ZZ, Linguini Vongole, Chicken Massimo, Veal Parmesan, Spicy Rigatoni*



### ↓ ABOUT TIME

Breitling has opened its sixth store in India, at Race Course, Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu). The new 1,000sq-ft boutique boasts the country's first-ever Spotlight Counter, which displays the brand's latest women's collection and allows customers to try on different watches facing a large spotlight mirror.



All images courtesy respective brands



# MIND

## Shifting Perspectives

- 54 ➔ VIEWPOINT
- 60 ➔ CONSCIOUS TRAVELLER
- 66 ➔ FRAME BY FRAME

Dan Brown



# THE Code-father

Bestselling author Dan Brown is back with another Robert Langdon adventure. He opens up about his extensive travels, pursuing music, and his wish to be as cool as his protagonist

words by Shrabasti Anindita Mallik

**The Secret of Secrets took eight years to complete.**

**What made that journey so long? Was it the research?**

Since the book is a lot about human consciousness, I had to learn an enormous amount to be able to write about it. It is hard to write a thriller on such an ethereal and ephemeral topic; I always felt like I was trying to grab smoke because it is just sort of everywhere. But I am really happy with how the book has come out.

**Langdon shares your birthday, birthplace, and education. How much of yourself do you see in him?**

Langdon is the man I wish I could be. He is much cooler, much braver, much wittier, and much smarter. He is a fusion of a lot of things that I am passionate about—art and architecture, mysteries, codes, and, of course, symbols. It is funny; I remember saying once that Langdon is way smarter than I am. You see, my dad is a teacher, and I grew up on the campus of a prep school, and all my heroes were teachers. So, I wrote about a hero who was a teacher—Robert Langdon; that is a real name.

**How does travelling inspire your work?**

I have always liked to use location as a character and when I am travelling, I also look for what is interesting about a

Dan Brown with his fur baby, Winston

Dan Brown





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**TOP AND BOTTOM**  
Brown harbours a deep love for music; He started learning to play the piano from a young age.

character called Prague or Paris. I keep my eyes open for interesting locations to set action or conversations or to create codes or to challenge Langdon in some way. For example, in *The Secret of Secrets*, he has to get in a tiny elevator to go up to the top of a tower. I got in that elevator and hated every minute of it. It was tiny, old, and scary. And I decided, well, I must find a way to use this tower. So, the location, really, in many ways, starts to shape the plot. All these locations start to create pillars... the geographic pillars on which you start to build the book.

**Do you keep a note of those little, tiny details to incorporate them in the narrative?**

Oh yes! Definitely. And I do a lot of writing while I am there, rather than taking a picture or video or just making a note, like, 'Hey, use this alley'. Because, really, reading is a written medium;



**NO MORE SECRETS**

**A destination in your bucket list**

*Jaipur*

**A book you are currently reading**

*Life 3.0 by Max Tegmark*

**All-time favourite food**

*Pizza*

**All-time favourite destination**

*My home library*

**An author who inspires**

*Joseph Campbell*

**Favourite musician**

*Tough to choose between Beethoven and Billy Joel*

so, my job is to ensure that when you read it, you feel it and visualise it. That is why I use text to vividly describe a scene because you can take a picture but you will forget about the aroma from a bakery around the corner or the sound of the crows up on the balcony... those tiny details matter.

**Any travel memory that has remained with you long after your visit?**

For this book, certainly. Standing on top of the Petřín Tower [in Prague] was quite scary. Although it is a scale model of the Eiffel Tower, it is quite high and windy, yet absolutely fascinating. Then there was the Baroque Library at the Clementinum, which plays an integral role in the novel. It is one of those rooms that you step into and it just catches your breath; it is so spectacular. And you can almost see the history as you look down the corridor. It is pretty amazing.




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**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**

Brown took a rickshaw ride during his trip to India in 2014; The author with director Rob Howard during the filming of *Angels and Demons*; India holds a special place in his heart; With his mother, Connie Brown, on his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Any future possibility of Langdon having an adventure in India?**

Don't think I haven't tried to (*laughs*). I mean, it is certainly a very logical place for Langdon to go. It is filled with history and symbolism, and so many different spiritual traditions all coexisting—it is fascinating. But truth be told, I do feel like I do not know enough yet to write about it. I believe it would almost be disrespectful until I have a better understanding. I need to come and spend some time in India.

**Writing, however, was not the first thing that you did; it was music. When did you realise that words were your calling?**

I wrote a lot as a little kid. In fact, I dictated stories to my mom, and she would write them down. I wrote my first book at age five—*The Giraffe, The Pig, and The Pants on Fire*; I drew the

**DEAR DIARY**

"I first visited India when I was around 18 to sing as a part of a choir in Delhi's Kamani Auditorium. My second visit to the country was in 2014 for Penguin's Annual Lecture. The people were so warm and welcoming. And Indian cuisine is my favourite because I love food with flavour. Some of the sauces that I had were of the prettiest colours one could imagine; they were delicious."

pictures too. I played a lot of music as a kid, and studied creative writing and music composition in college. When I got out of university, I had a choice between writing books and music. At age 20, I thought music was going to be much more fun. And so, I went out to Los Angeles, got a record deal, and made a record with a prominent British record producer. And it sold a total of 12 copies. My mom bought 10 of them, I am guessing (*laughs*). It was a commercial failure; and about that time, I had an

idea for a novel. So, I wrote it [*Digital Fortress*] and the very first publisher who read it, bought it and it sold 12 copies. Mom bought 10. Then I wrote *Angels and Demons* [first appearance of Robert Langdon] followed by *Deception Point*; nobody bought those either. I switched publishers and wrote *The Da Vinci Code* and that book found an audience... a big audience. Eventually the first three 'failed' books went on to become Number #1, and I did not change a single word in any of them.





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# MORE THAN JUST VIEWS

Exploring Copenhagen via its rooftops gave me a fresh perspective on how a city can create new spaces for joy

words by **Shalbha Sarda**

*ØsterGRO is a working, growing, rooftop urban farm in Østerbro*

**W**hile there are so many things to grab your attention at ground level when you are on holiday, I find myself doing something different—gazing up. Not at the stars but at the rooftops in Copenhagen, the design-forward capital of Denmark. This is the land of 'hedonistic sustainability', a term coined by BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group), which says sustainability does not have to mean sacrifice. It can be fun and even indulgent. And nowhere is this philosophy more tangible than in Copenhagen, a UNESCO's World Capital of Architecture until 2025 and one of the world's happiest cities. Coincidence? I think not.

My guide, Bente Hoffman from Slow Tours Copenhagen, tells me, "For us, no building is just one thing. And when there is no space at ground level, we just move it upstairs."

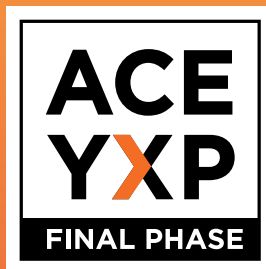
I decide to see just how far this idea of joyful sustainability can go by taking my exploration to the roof level for a day. Spoiler: I am not disappointed. My day begins in Nordhavn, Copenhagen's 'five-minute city', a neighbourhood where everything you need is within a five-minute walk or bike ride. In a deep red building, two bold diagonal staircases stand in front of a façade that resembles an art canvas. The handrails with green climbers practically beckon me to take their support and go up.



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- Join a communal dining table (book a seat at Absalon, a vibrant community dinner hall)
- Browse Danish art and minimalist design (visit Designmuseum Danmark for inspiration)
- Take a plunge in the harbour at Islands Brygge, a favourite local swimming spot
- Savour a classic *smørrebrød* at Aamanns Genbo, and pair it with a chilled schnapps

### TOP AND BOTTOM

*CopenHill is an expansive rooftop that offers ski and snowboarding facilities along with provisions for running, hiking, and climbing; Filmtaget is a rooftop open-air cinema focused on Danish films.*

At the uppermost level, the rooftop buzzes with energy. I watch people swinging from pull-up bars, leaping onto floor trampolines, and crawling up a spiral tower. It is Konditaget Lüders, a rooftop gym and playground perched atop a multi-storey car park. Public space is scarce down below, and Konditaget cleverly transforms urban necessity into an active lifestyle hub that blends quintessential daily activity, like parking

your car, with a workout in fresh air with a sea view. Just Copenhagen doing what it does best: making life better through design.

Just a short walk, still in Nordhavn and now feeling hungry, I take a lift to the 17<sup>th</sup> floor of The Silo building. An erstwhile grain silo may not sound like a visit-worthy place; but make no mistake, it is now one of the fanciest buildings in the neighbourhood, and an award-winning,

posh residential address. The rooftop has its own accolades for the food. At Silo CPH, I order the famous Danish open sandwich, the *smørrebrød*, which comes with a panoramic view of the harbour. It is a mix of social bar, lounge, restaurant, and private party venue.

Two metro changes—an easy breeze with Copenhagen's seamless public transport system and its Copenhagen Card—and I find myself at Refshaleøen,



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**TOP AND BOTTOM**  
Konditaget Lüders may look like a regular building from the side, but has a rooftop gym and playground; Cinemateket is an all-weather cinema roof—with one of the best views of the city.

staring up at a ski slope. Well, this is Scandinavia, and yes, it could easily be one of those clichéd things to tick off on a Nordic bucket list. But unlike its cousin, Oslo, Copenhagen does not have hills in its backyard. But the city is not about to let that stop anyone. Therefore, once again, design steps in, ensuring residents do not miss the joy of downhill gliding, even in a flat city.

CopenHill is a massive, sloping rooftop perched atop a fully-functioning waste-to-energy plant. That's right; beneath your skis, tonnes of rubbish are being transformed into clean energy. Seasoned skiers carve down a run, the length of an Olympic half-pipe. For non-skiers, there is a rooftop hiking trail and the world's tallest climbing wall.

My next stop is Filmtaget, the rooftop terrace of Cinemateket, an all-weather cinema roof dedicated to Danish film culture. I arrive just in time for their May and June series, *Women of Change*, a spotlight on bold female voices. The screen lights up, the city fades, and I am completely pulled in. However, there is plenty of magic off-screen as well. From up here, you get a cracking view of Rosenborg Castle and the King's Garden.



Art, skyline, and a touch of royal drama from one rooftop seat is not a bad deal at all.

In Østerbro, I stand in front of a structure wrapped in glass, a building that once served as a car auction house. From the street, nothing about it suggests what lies on the top. But upstairs, I am transported to a metaphorical bridge between the countryside and urban life. This roof is a working, growing urban farm called ØsterGRO.

Up here, on a 600sqm terrace, rows of vegetable beds stretch across the space. Rabbits, chickens, and bees make their homes

among kale, carrots, and herbs. A narrow paved path cuts through the gardens, leading to Gro Spiseri, a small greenhouse restaurant offering organic, farm-style meals. In the evening, long tables glow under string lights and the aroma of herbs fills the air, creating the perfect setting for a slow, seasonal dinner. But ØsterGRO is more than just a pretty green space. It prompts one to ponder the natural cycle and rhythm of seasonality, and how easily it can be forgotten in a world of supermarkets where everything is available all the time.

## WHERE TO STAY

### **D'Angleterre, Kongens Nytorv**

The original grand dame of Copenhagen hotels, it is a luxury stay right in the city centre.

### **Audo House, Nordhavn**

A chic boutique stay with a concept furniture showroom and a café.

### **25hours Hotel Indre By**

A quirky, school-themed hotel full of nostalgic charm, and its central location makes it an ideal starting point for city explorations.



## GETTING THERE

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Expanding its presence across the globe, Amul has been exporting Amul Milk, renowned for its long shelf life, to several Asian and African countries. In 2024, Amul made its biggest international stride by launching Amul Milk in the USA, introducing Amul Taaza, Amul Gold, Amul Shakti, and Amul Slim 'n' Trim. Continuing this momentum, Amul made its mark in European markets by launching Amul Milk in Spain and Portugal in 2025, further strengthening its global footprint and bringing the Taste of India to international shelves.



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# IN STEP WITH NATURE

The future of India's wild spaces depends on how  
mindfully we tread in the jungle

words by **Amith Bangre**

**A**t dawn, when a reserve gate creaks open and the forest breathes out the night's chill, the wild seems to wake up just for us. A drongo imitates much of the forest in one song, swamp deer graze in dew-laden grass, and the river flows as if it has no beginning or end. After more than two decades exploring India's forests, rivers, and grasslands, I have learned a truth I share with every guest: our presence is never neutral. The question is not what we will see but what we will leave behind.

## LOOK BEYOND THE TIGER

Most travellers arrive in tiger country, and I understand the excitement. My own career has unfolded in places where a single striped shadow can shape a morning. But if our gaze stops at stripes, we miss the web that sustains them. Elephants carve corridors and hold entire forests together. Rhinos in Assam sculpt floodplains. Vultures cleanse carcasses before disease spreads. The Ganges river dolphin surfaces to remind us that rivers still breathe. And quieter treasures remain: lion-tailed macaques in the Western Ghats, *hangul* (stags) in Kashmir,

A safari in progress  
at the Jim Corbett  
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Nilgiri *tahr* on escarpments, dugongs in the Andaman meadows, gharials in Chambal, and red pandas in Singalila National Park (West Bengal). On Odisha's beaches, Olive Ridley turtles climb ashore by the thousands to nest under moonlight. Each is as profound as a tiger on the track. These are not side notes—they are the fabric itself.

### BE MINDFUL OF YOUR FOOTPRINT

When you walk onto a reserve, you also decide the story you will be a part of. Some lodges tout eco-credentials as a badge, others integrate them into daily operation. The key is in tiny specifics: are guides recruited from neighbouring villages? Does rainwater help feed local gardens? Does the conservation fee that some lodges charge, reach rangers or teachers? I have watched visitors understand that their rupee has a pulse—that an honest wage keeps a kid in school, that a levy pays for patrols on a river. That is when travel transforms from consuming to conserving.

Stewardship starts with ground-level choices. Putting trash in a bin is no better if it goes in an open fire. Few reserves have robust rubbish disposal systems, so guests need to be advised: take back

everything you carry or pack nothing the wild cannot process. Walking where you are directed also counts. Every shortcut damages plants by crushing them, eats away the soil, and dislodges delicate habitats. There are designated paths so that we may see without wrecking.

### FOLLOW RESTRAINT

Other pressures are subtler. Water is

as precious as grass; a short shower is a quiet courtesy. Noise, too, is pollution. The wild has its own music—the *langur's* call, the splash of a kingfisher, the sigh of *sal* leaves. To blast music, host DJ weddings or shout on the park edge robs both animals and people of silence. My plea to those who stage such events: go green, lower the volume, let sustainability lead. Even in



The greater one-horned rhinoceros in Kaziranga National Park in Assam; (inset) At Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan, a tourist uses binoculars to get a better view.





A man in a blue pinstripe suit and red tie stands on the left, with his hand on the shoulder of an older man in a blue pinstripe suit and red tie who is seated on a brown leather tufted sofa. The background is a dark wood-paneled wall with shelves displaying various fabrics and bolts of cloth.




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**LEFT AND RIGHT**  
The lion-tailed macaque is endemic to the Western Ghats; The Chambal river is a sanctuary for India's gharials.



accommodation, bigger is seldom better. Large hotels with multiple pools and chemical-heavy upkeep consume more than they give. Smaller, thoughtfully-designed lodges—with genuine eco-friendly policies—offer both comfort and conscience. Luxury in the wild should never come at the wild's expense.

In tiger reserves, restraint is my motto. A sighting is not a trophy, but a privilege. I have seen a tigress laze with her young ones due to the fact that we kept at bay, and I have watched silence turn out to be a lifetime memory. Good guides allow the moment to approach you rather than chase after it. At times, the best stories are the ones you fail to put on Facebook instantaneously. But restraint also means listening. Too often, visitors pressure naturalists, push drivers or offer bribes to enter non-tourism zones. Not only is this illegal, it also betrays the forest. The irony is that the best sightings are usually in tourism areas—because animals are used to vehicles and behave naturally. In untouched zones, they vanish when they hear an engine. Respect your guide, trust their judgement. They are more than companions; they are interpreters of the wild, and guardians of its balance.

### WHAT WE WEAR



Forests are not meant for fashion shows. Bright colours, perfumes or flashy fabrics startle wildlife and shatter the calm. Choose muted tones and simple clothes that blend into the landscape and respect both the dignity of the wild and the culture of the people who live alongside these spaces.

### SMALL ACTS HAVE BIG IMPACT

The wild does not owe us a show. It has endured monsoons, droughts, and centuries of silence. But we need the wild—for humility, balance, and the reminder that we are custodians, not owners. More travellers are beginning to understand: choosing smaller camps, carrying waste home, supporting edge communities. Each small act leaves a trace of care.

When the gate swings wide tomorrow and the track stretches out before you like a promise, ask yourself: will the journey make the forest stronger for you to have found it? Flying might bring you here, but it is how you walk once you land that will decide the future of India's wild spaces.





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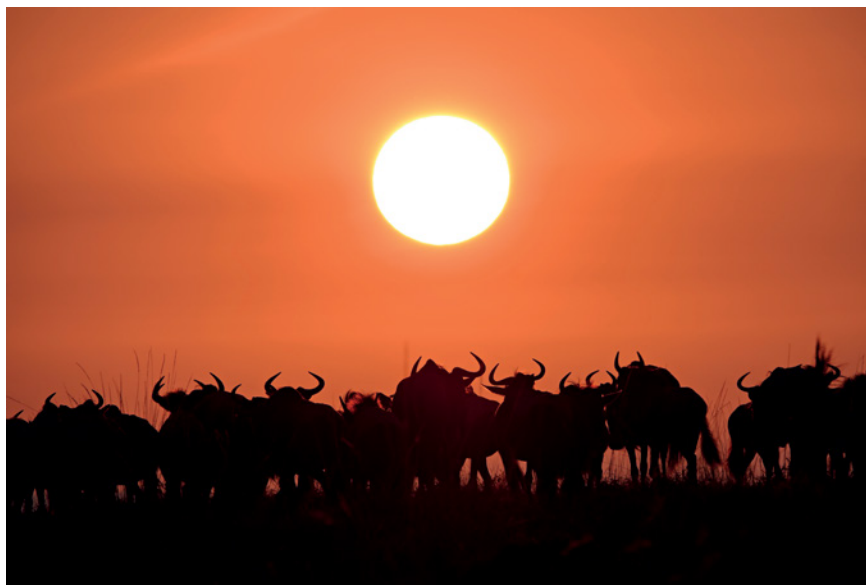
# A MOVEMENT IN TIME

Watching the wildebeest migration in the Masai Mara National Reserve is one of those experiences that stays with you forever  
words and photographs by **Capt. Mike A Johnsingh**





*There is always an element of luck involved when you plan to watch the famous wildebeest migration that takes place every year in the Masai Mara National Reserve on the borders of Kenya and Tanzania. The reason for this is that the actual crossing of the herds across the Mara and Sand rivers happens in just a few minutes, so you could be in the area and still miss it. The other variable element is the weather—when it rains, the wildebeest do not want to get into the water. We spent a couple of hours waiting with bated breath for the wildebeest to cross, all the while hearing their thundering hooves and the specific grunting sound that they make. The crossing is complicated by the crocodiles and lions that lie in wait for the wildebeest, and watching them snatch their prey is live theatre, quite simply one of the wonders of the natural world.*



**About the photographer:**

**Capt. Mike A Johnsingh** is an Air India captain who loves to explore and photograph our planet. Mike dedicates this photo feature to the memory of his father, Dr AJT Johnsingh, an eminent wildlife biologist, whose passion for nature inspired him to capture its timeless beauty.





**TOP AND BOTTOM**  
A wildebeest herd attempts to cross the Mara river without falling prey to crocodiles; A lioness lies in wait in the Sand river to hunt the wildebeest.



**GETTING THERE**

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# IN THE FRAME

Photo tours let you focus on different species under the able eyes of a guide, but animal welfare must always be paramount

words by **Chandreyi Bandyopadhyay**



Rhinos in action,  
clicked by Sudhir  
Shivaram

Imagine devoting three days to tracking a wild animal and shooting it with your camera, with expert guidance from professionals

throughout. If you are a photography enthusiast and you love wildlife, then a photography retreat is just what the doctor ordered. Growing in popularity, they give you a rare chance to shoot elusive species high up in the mountains or hiding in the dense foliage of rainforests. You get to disconnect from the stress of everyday life and focus on just the outcome. Here are some photo retreats so you can choose the one that best fits your interests.

## SAFARI PHOTOGRAPHY

The core principle of wildlife photography is the realisation that you are entering the animal's territory. "Respecting their space is vital, yet many safari operators neglect briefing visitors on etiquette. Without this awareness, both animals and tourists suffer—impacting well-being, safety, and the quality of every experience," says award-winning photographer and educator Sudhir Shivaram.

Successful photography, he notes, requires homework and follows two approaches: species-specific (focusing on behaviour or breeding cycles, like tiger cub sightings), and park-based (capturing the range of biodiversity a reserve offers). "Animal welfare must come first. Break the cycle of pressure and set an example," he stresses.



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**TOP TO BOTTOM**

A photo tour to snap the elusive snow leopard in the Himalayas; A 'hide' is a place to shoot that is hidden from sight; Jayaram's bush frog from Kerala, photographed by Vipul Ramanuj.

Preparation, the right gear, and ethics are non-negotiable. Binoculars remain essential for spotting, while a 70–200mm lens for habitats and a 200–600mm telephoto cover most needs. Beanbags or monopods come in handy to manage heavy lenses. Shivaram also highlights the role of safari vehicles and crews: "Seek photography-modified jeeps and cut the engines during shots; experienced photographers can even help train guides on the correct positioning for great shots."

When it comes to tiger tourism, overcrowding and rule-breaking are common. Shivaram's advice: "Resist pressuring drivers, follow park regulations, and accept that some shots are not worth it. The welfare of the animal outweighs any image."

**MACRO AND NIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY**

Macro photography opens a window



into nature without costly safaris or far-flung expeditions. "Some of the most striking images—tiny insects, fungi, mushrooms or delicate species interactions—can be captured right in your backyard," says Vipul Ramanuj, an expert herpetologist. By revealing details invisible to the naked eye through affordable macro lenses, this style offers an accessible entry point. "Education is central to ethical macro photography. Herping—photographing reptiles and amphibians—demands location-specific knowledge and safety protocols," Ramanuj stresses. Beginners should start locally before advancing to specialised herping tours.



Guided experiences can help people overcome long-held fears of snakes or spiders, replacing fear with respect and fascination. Orientation before tours can build awareness of species behaviour, conservation issues, and safe practices.

Ramanuj advises enthusiasts to work with experienced guides, never attempt night herping alone, and always prioritise species welfare.



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## PHOTOGRAPHER'S TOOLKIT

Start with a field guide, binoculars, and a DSLR. The choice of camera depends on purpose and experience. DSLRs or mirrorless bodies work for beginners, while advanced photographers may prefer full-frame, high-speed systems.

### Lenses

- Base lens: 70–200mm (versatile for mammals, portraits, close encounters)
- Telephoto lens: 200–600mm (for birds, distant mammals, flight shots)
- Wide Angle lens: ZEISS Batis 2.8/18 full-frame autofocus lens

### Support and Protection

- Binoculars: Pocket binoculars in Victory and Terra range; Advanced options include Victory SF, and Conquest HDX ranges (all ZEISS)
- Spotting Scope: Victory Harpia and Conquest Gavia 85 (both ZEISS)
- Tripods: Gitzo Mountaineer, Manfrotto 055, Benro Mach3
- Monopods: Sirui P-326, Manfrotto XPRO, Gitzo Traveler
- Beanbags: For jeep safaris
- Must carry: Extra batteries and memory cards
- Essentials: Rain covers and lens cleaning kits

### CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Erwin D'Rose leads high-altitude photography tours; Bird photographer Jainy Maria Kuriakose; Northern carmine bee-eaters atop an Arabian bustard, by Jainy.



"Frogs are especially fragile, while snakes and scorpions can be photographed safely with knowledge and respect. Fear often stems from misconceptions, not reality," he notes. For gear, 90–105mm macro lenses work well, while smartphones with macro attachments provide a strong start. In India, regions rich in night life are best explored pre- or post-monsoon, with October being ideal.

### HIDE PHOTOGRAPHY

As the name suggests, this involves not being in the line of sight of the subject. "Hide photography is all about patience, focus, and discipline," says wildlife photographer Shivang Mehta. Sessions often demand hours of stillness, with unique rewards. "From intimate portraits to wide-angle frames triggered remotely, hides give you creative freedom," he explains. Success, however, hinges on balance—equipment, subject distance, and, above all, respecting natural behaviour. Ethical concerns remain central. "Baiting is always debated. While waterbodies, bird feeders or salt licks

may be acceptable, using live bait crosses the line," Mehta says.

He advises tailoring

lenses to the subject,

"Telephotos for birds, a 70–200mm for mammals, and remote wide angles for environmental shots." In India, hide photography is still evolving and is primarily bird-focused. Notable locations include Kipling Hide at Pench Tree Lodge and the Jamoon hide near Corbett, plus seasonal hides in the Western Ghats. Internationally, African hides at locations like Zimanga and Shompole camps, and Ol Pejeta Conservancy are excellent. "They allow you to photograph everything—from lions and elephants to rarities like caracals, often with advanced lighting set-ups," Mehta notes. His golden rule: "To prioritise ethics and patience, because authentic encounters create the most powerful images."

### HIGH-ALTITUDE PHOTOGRAPHY

"High-altitude wildlife photography demands patience, preparation, and ethics," says Erwin D'Rose, Associate Director at Jehan Numa Wilderness. Acclimatisation here is non-negotiable. "Skip it, and you risk serious altitude sickness," he says. Respecting wildlife also means maintaining a distance.



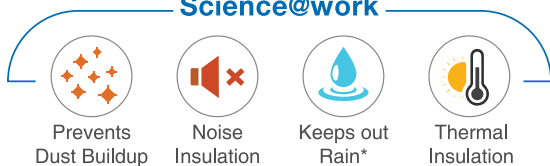


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"Use long lenses and never chase a shot," says the expedition leader. Fragile mountain ecosystems also demand restraint. So, "Leave no trace, avoid trampling off-trail, and fly drones only with permission. Silence is critical as noise carries differently up here."

Crews must prepare for volatile weather with contingency plans, work with local trackers and porters, while supporting them to strengthen conservation-minded communities. Regions like Ladakh, Spiti, and Sikkim reward those with physical readiness, ethical restraint, and logistical planning.

"I rely on ZEISS scopes and binoculars for clarity in extreme conditions," D'Rose adds. Must-haves include a sturdy tripod with gimbal head, warm spare batteries, dry bags, and first aid.

### BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY

"This begins with clarity of purpose—is it a career, a hobby or conservation?" says Jainy Maria Kuriakose, an acclaimed bird photographer. "That choice defines your gear, approach, and learning curve." Success, she stresses, depends on systematic study. Field guides form the foundation, hence, she recommends the 'plate method'—working page by page,



### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Local guides play a crucial role in tracking species in high terrain; African elephants shot from a 'hide' by photographer Shivang Mehta; A snow leopard captured by Erwin D'Rose.

then reviewing after each trip. "It builds a strong mental database," she says. Progression should be gradual, starting with field guides, then binoculars, and, finally, a camera. Beginners should begin locally at backyards and parks to hone their observation skills. "Birds are fast and elusive. Multiple angles, call recordings, and expert consultations can help." Binoculars are critical. The mantra is simple: "Photograph everything, not just rarities. It documents subspecies,

seasonal plumages, and behaviour while reducing misidentification." For equipment, "a DSLR with a 100–400mm zoom and quality binoculars is an ideal starter set-up". For destinations, she highlights North-east India for thrilling 'birdwaves' of mixed flocks, Ladakh for high-altitude species, and the Andamans for expedition-style birding. "Modern tools—eBird, social media, online ID forums—make birding easier than ever. Use them," she says.



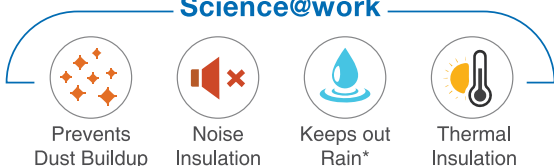


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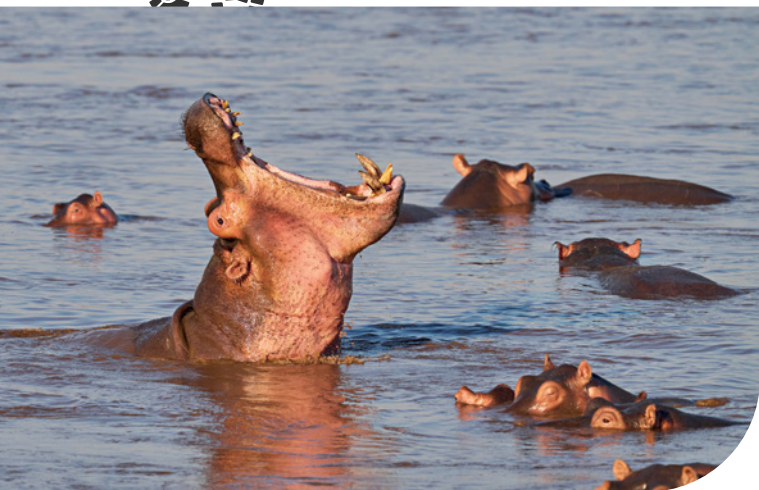


# ON THE RIGHT PATH

Walking safaris are an intimate, immersive adventure.  
Find out where you can experience them

words by **Team Namaste.ai**

**W**hat sets a walking safari apart is that instead of viewing animals at a distance, you are right there on the ground, with the prospect of coming face to face with a wild inhabitant. You are now equally engaged in the process—walking with the guide and feeling the thrill, albeit, with just a wee amount of trepidation. And as you get closer to the animal, speaking in hushed tones, and you see it in front of you, the knowledge that you are barely 100m away, sends your heart racing. A jeep safari cannot match this.



## ◀ SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK, ZAMBIA

This is said to be the 'home' of the walking safari, an idea conceptualised by conservationist and safari guide, Norman Carr, in the 1960s. Set around the Luangwa river, it is home to about 60 animal and over 400 bird species, including hippos, zebras, antelopes, yellow-billed storks, and egrets. Since several lodges remain open all year, visitors can explore the area in both dry and wet seasons—ranging from bare bush in winter (April to October) to a green wonderland in summer (November to March).

[southluangwa.com](http://southluangwa.com)

## JOZANI-CHWAKA BAY ▶ NATIONAL PARK, TANZANIA

The only national park in Zanzibar, it allows visitors to discover hidden gems. Spot rare red colobus monkeys and delve into unique mangrove forests. Other species of fauna found in the area are the Blue Sykes Monkey, and 40 species of birds, including Fischer's turacos, brown-headed parrots, Pemba Sunbird, and Zanzibar red bishops. The best time to visit is from June to October.

[jozaniforest.com](http://jozaniforest.com)





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### SATPURA TIGER RESERVE, INDIA >

This park in Madhya Pradesh, best visited between October and June, is home to numerous endangered species, including the Giant Squirrel, the Indian Skimmer, the Black Bellied Tern, and the Leaf-nosed Bat. There is also a chance to spot over 300 species of birds, mainly the Malabar Pied Hornbill, the Paradise Flycatcher (the state bird, locally called *Doodhraj*), and the Malabar Whistling Thrush. Migratory birds like Bar-headed Geese and Pintails can also be found here in autumn.

[forest.mponline.gov.in](http://forest.mponline.gov.in)



### NAMERI NATIONAL PARK & TIGER RESERVE, INDIA

Nestled in the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas in Assam, it is a birdwatcher's paradise, with over 300 avian species, including the white-winged wood duck (the state bird). Visit during the peak months (November to April) to spot nearly 29 mammal species, including the *gaur*, *sambar*, hog deer, barking deer, Himalayan Crestless Porcupine, and the Indian mongoose, along with elephants and tigers.

[assamtourism.gov.in](http://assamtourism.gov.in)

### ▲ KRUGER NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH AFRICA

This is the country's premier reserve, where visitors can see rhinos, elephants, and other animals typical to the terrain like kudu, *klipspringer*, and mountain *reedbuck* (all antelope species). The Nyalaland trail offers access to unique species like *nyala*, Sharps grysbok, eland, roan antelope, yellow spotted rock hyrax, elephant shrews, and red rock rabbits. One can also spot hippos and crocodiles. Some parts of the park come alive after sunset, allowing tourists to hear the Mozambique night jar, African Scops owl, and other night calls from the camp. Best visited from May to September.

[sanparks.org](http://sanparks.org)



### < FLINDERS CHASE NATIONAL PARK, AUSTRALIA

The Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail here offers a lite version of a walking safari. Located near Adelaide, and best visited in summer, the area teems with wildlife, including rare species like the Kangaroo Island echidna, tammar wallaby, Rosenberg's goanna, brush-tailed possum, six species of bats and frogs, and more. The region is said to be a 'zoo without walls' so, visitors have a good chance of spotting the local wildlife.

[parks.sa.gov.au](http://parks.sa.gov.au)





# YOUR AIR INDIA



## THE TRANSFORMATION

Discover the many perks of flying Business Class on the Airbus A350-900

**p 82** 


## ROUTES

We present our latest global connectivity, offering you unparalleled access worldwide

**p 93** 

## PARTNERS

Through our Codeshare and Interline partnerships, we try to bring the world closer

**p 104** 





# PAMPERED IN THE SKY

Flying the Airbus A350-900 from New Delhi to London, coupled with Air India's warm hospitality, was truly special

words by Nishtha Grover

**A**ir India has been a part of my life for over 10 years now. From flying between Pune and New Delhi every month during college to taking my first international trip, the airline has been a major contributor in making me the traveller I am today. So, when I found out that I would be experiencing the new Airbus A350-900 on my New Delhi to London trip with Air India, I was excited. 'A global airline with an Indian heart' is the philosophy that the airline embodies, and this is evident the moment you step onto the plane. The welcoming smiles of the cabin crew, exuding warmth and grace

in their immaculate Manish Malhotra-designed attire, start the journey on a happy note.

## FLY LIKE ROYALTY

The Business Class is the real star of the show and makes you feel like royalty. The interiors, in soothing blue and grey hues, are chic and modern. Business Class has 28 suites, with sliding doors providing maximum privacy for the nine-and-a-half-hour journey. The first order of business was exploring my private cocoon, which the cabin crew very graciously helped with. Extremely comfortable seats that convert into snug full-flat beds

(big enough, and more, for a six-ft-tall passenger) meant I would not be landing in London with jet lag and could explore the city, refreshed.

The suites boast a small coat closet, a shoe drawer that comes with a pair of slippers, and a storage compartment for necessary documents—I used this to store my skincare products! The footwell is nice and spacious and the tray table is designed in a manner that it can be used as a smaller tray for drinks or pulled closer to convert into a larger table for meals. There is a side table too, giving guests ample space to store their belongings.

When you are not sleeping, there





is a large 21-inch screen where you can catch some of the latest movies. For children, there are games as well. In addition, Air India provides complimentary Wi-Fi services 35,000 feet up in the air. If you do not want to stay connected to the outside world, then the noise-cancelling headphones will be your best friend.

I would absolutely recommend taking the window seat as the view of the Hindu Kush mountains, while flying over Afghanistan, is something I won't forget. The window shades also have different settings, allowing you to set the mood in your private den.

### ENJOY THE LITTLE TOUCHES

A trip with Air India is never complete without complimentary amenities. In Business Class you will get a soft *sozni*-embroidered woollen blanket and a two-in-one cushion that can be used both as a pillow and bedding. The bespoke amenities kit and the comfortable cotton pyjamas provided ensure a good night's rest.

### SAVOUR THE FOOD

The culinary experience is where the brand scores brownie points. The menus have meals from across the world with Indian flavours taking centre stage. My favourites were the idli and *upma* platters, and the saffron *phirni*



accompanied by mini gulab jamuns. The *phirni* had just the correct amount of sweetness, while the juxtaposing flavours of the refreshing idli served with sambar, chutney, and fresh fruit added a delicious touch. The cheese platter deserves a shout out too.

Other delectable options that stood out were the Scialatielli Pasta and the Chocolate Espresso Ganache. The accompanying world-class beverages are worth praise too, especially the Laurent-Perrier champagne that I

### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

The assortment of fruit is refreshing; The large 21-inch screen streams the Air India safety video (as seen) along with the latest movies; The author enjoys her Laurent-Perrier champagne with popcorn; The Maharaja-embossed crockery is a subtle reminder of the iconic mascot; The window seat is worth bagging for gorgeous mountain views.

enjoyed with salt-and pepper popcorn. The mimosas are lovely as well. I must mention the cute salt-and-pepper shakers, their design inspired by an Indian lunch box.

### BASK IN THE WARMTH

Known for their hospitality, the cabin crew elevates the inflight experience. Catering to all my needs and making me feel like a royal guest was what made my journey special. From sharing recommendations for the best food and drink pairings and taking care of all our special needs to constantly checking in on passengers—the crew's hands-on, warm approach really takes things up a notch.



# WHERE HISTORY BLOOMS

Use your spare hours in the capital to stroll through some of its most verdant gardens—several with historical monuments within them

words by **Abhilasha Ojha**

## SUNDER NURSERY

There is an old joke among Delhiites: “Why are the streets of Delhi empty? Because everyone and their neighbour is in Sunder Nursery.” Reopened in 2018 after a massive restoration exercise undertaken by Aga Khan Trust for Culture, this is a historical 16<sup>th</sup>-century complex with six World Heritage tomb-gardens. Attracting nearly 12,000 visitors every week, it is adjacent to the historic Humayun’s Tomb, and boasts richly-landscaped gardens, elaborately-decorated water bodies, and restored monuments. With over 4,500 varieties of trees spanning 30 acres of a biodiversity zone, there are roughly 54 varieties of flowers, and approximately 80 species of birds. The heritage walks, organised every weekend, are very popular. Open all days from 7am to 10pm.

*Nizamuddin*

## YAMUNA BIODIVERSITY PARK

From being in a state of despair, this green space has emerged, in the last two decades, as the first biodiversity park of its kind in India. Spanning 457 acres, the area draws researchers and naturalists for its diverse flora and fauna, encompassing thousands of plant, insect, bird, fish, and animal species. Preserving the ecology of the Yamuna river basin, the park organises nature walks, birdwatching activities, yoga, and art workshops. It was in the news late last year when a rare bat

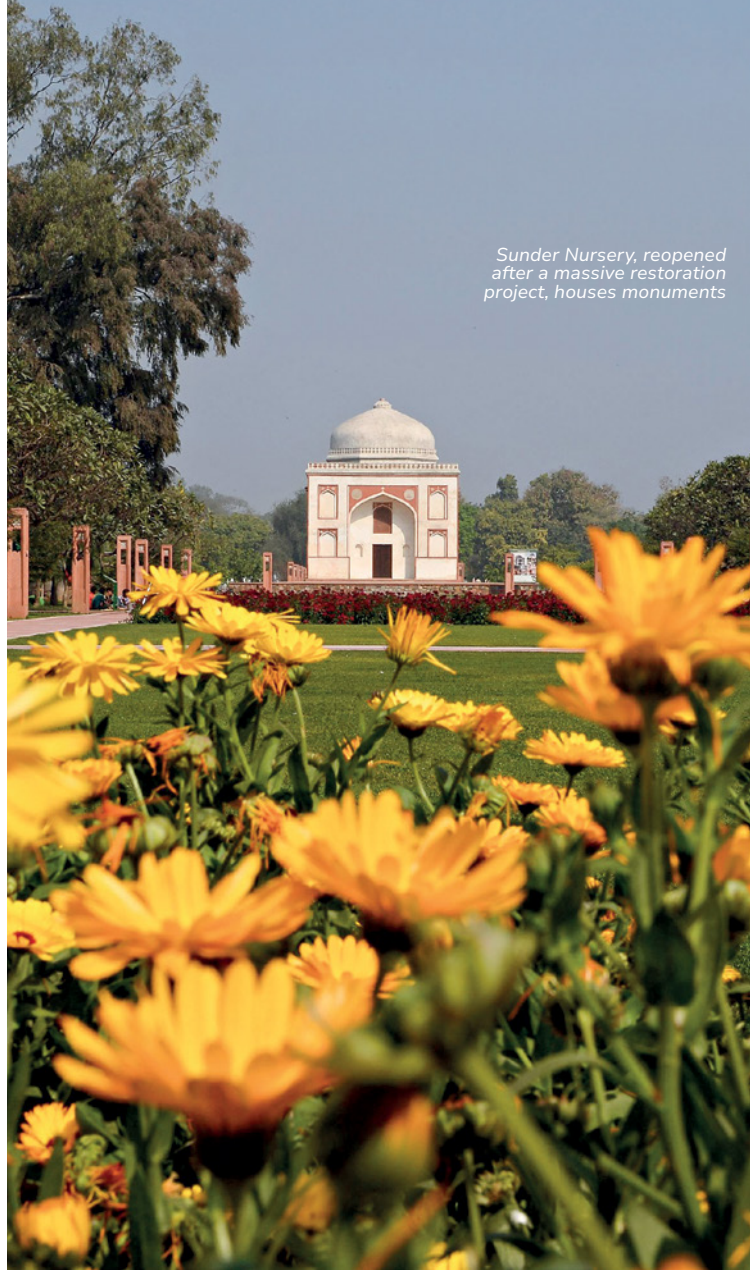
species—recorded previously only in Meghalaya, the Western Ghats, and Cambodia—was spotted here. Open from 10am to 5pm. Closed on Sunday.

*Wazirabad*

## LODHI GARDEN

Bang in the centre of Delhi is the famous Lodhi Garden that is abuzz with activity all year round. Couples posing for pre-wedding shoots, a yoga session in progress, a laughter club gathering, families and friends picnicking... the energy of this green space, spread over 90 acres and dotted with 15<sup>th</sup>-

*Sunder Nursery, reopened after a massive restoration project, houses monuments*





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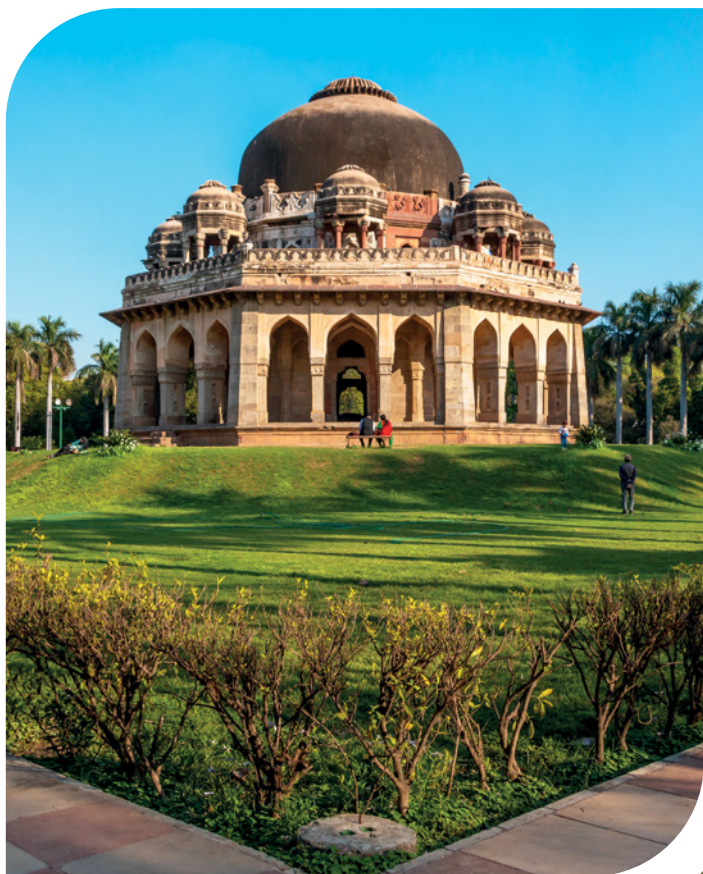


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**LEFT AND RIGHT**  
Lodhi Garden boasts several 15<sup>th</sup>-century monuments; Yamuna Biodiversity Park preserves the ecology of the river basin.

century monuments belonging to the Sayyid and Lodhi (also Lodi) dynasties, is infectious. There are Zen gardens with fountains, a water body with ducks floating around, and a three-acre butterfly conservatory that is home to many species of the winged beauty. A number of immersive birding and heritage walks take place here. Open all days from 6am to 8pm.  
*Lodhi Road, Lodhi Estate*

### SWARN JAYANTI PARK

Also called the Japanese Park, it is spread over nearly 237 acres, and has in its fold many thematic

landscapes, including a Japanese garden, Mughal-style garden, and a sculpture garden. Pick a spot—perhaps a repurposed tree trunk that doubles as a seating solution—and watch ducks, geese, even egrets and storks, as they float on and around the lakes. There is a dedicated lake for boating, and for the little ones, a park. The space also boasts ample walking paths and dedicated cycling enclosures along with a restaurant kiosk and exhibition area for flower shows and cultural events. Open from 5am to 8pm.  
*HL Parwana Road, Rohini*

### TALKATORA GARDEN

Sai Paranjpye's 1981 film *Chashme Buddoor* captures beautiful shots of this garden. This Mughal-styled green space dates back centuries and has witnessed a historic battle in the 1730s between the Mughals and the Marathas. The name is derived from *taal* (lake) that was traditionally in the form of a *katora* (bowl). With its clean pathways, jogging tracks, beautiful water bodies, and latticed monuments, the garden is a lesson in rediscovering lost architecture. Open from 6am to 8pm.  
*Near Rashtrapati Bhavan*



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# OUR WINGS

A look at the aircraft in Air India's fleet\*

**Airbus A319**



**06**

**Boeing 777-300ER**



**19**

**Airbus A320neo**



**94**

**Boeing 777-200LR**



**03**

**Airbus A320ceo**



**04**

**Boeing 787-9  
Dreamliner**



**06**

**Airbus A321ceo**



**13**

**Boeing 787-8  
Dreamliner**



**26**

**Airbus A321neo**



**10**

**Airbus A350-900**

**06**

**FLEET  
STRENGTH  
187**





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The new Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA, IATA code: NMI) will soon be operational and the Air India group will commence commercial flights from it during the airport's first phase of operations.

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In the initial phase of operations, Air India group's value carrier, Air India Express, will operate 20 daily departures from and to NMIA, connecting 15 Indian cities. The Air India group intends to scale up to 55 daily departures by mid-2026, including up to 5 daily international flights from NMIA. By winter 2026, the group aims to further expand its operations to 60 daily departures from NMIA, seamlessly connecting passengers to key domestic and international destinations.



## → SCALING NEW HEIGHTS

Air India's recent recognition at the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) Global EXPO in Los Angeles, as the 'Most Improved Airline' and acknowledgement as a Four-Star Global Airline, marks a milestone moment in its transformation journey. The awards are based on over one million passenger votes on flights across more than 600 airlines, with the process overseen by an independent administrator.

Over the last three years, Air India has been progressively working towards improving its product and service—from placing one of the largest aircraft orders (570) in the global aviation industry to investing US\$400 million in upgrading its existing fleet, and more—and this award bears testimony to the same. Thank you for your love and trust!



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From 26<sup>th</sup> October 2025, Air India will relocate 60 of its 180 daily domestic departures from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport Terminal 3 (T3) to the upgraded Terminal 2 (T2). All Air India international flights will continue to operate from T3.

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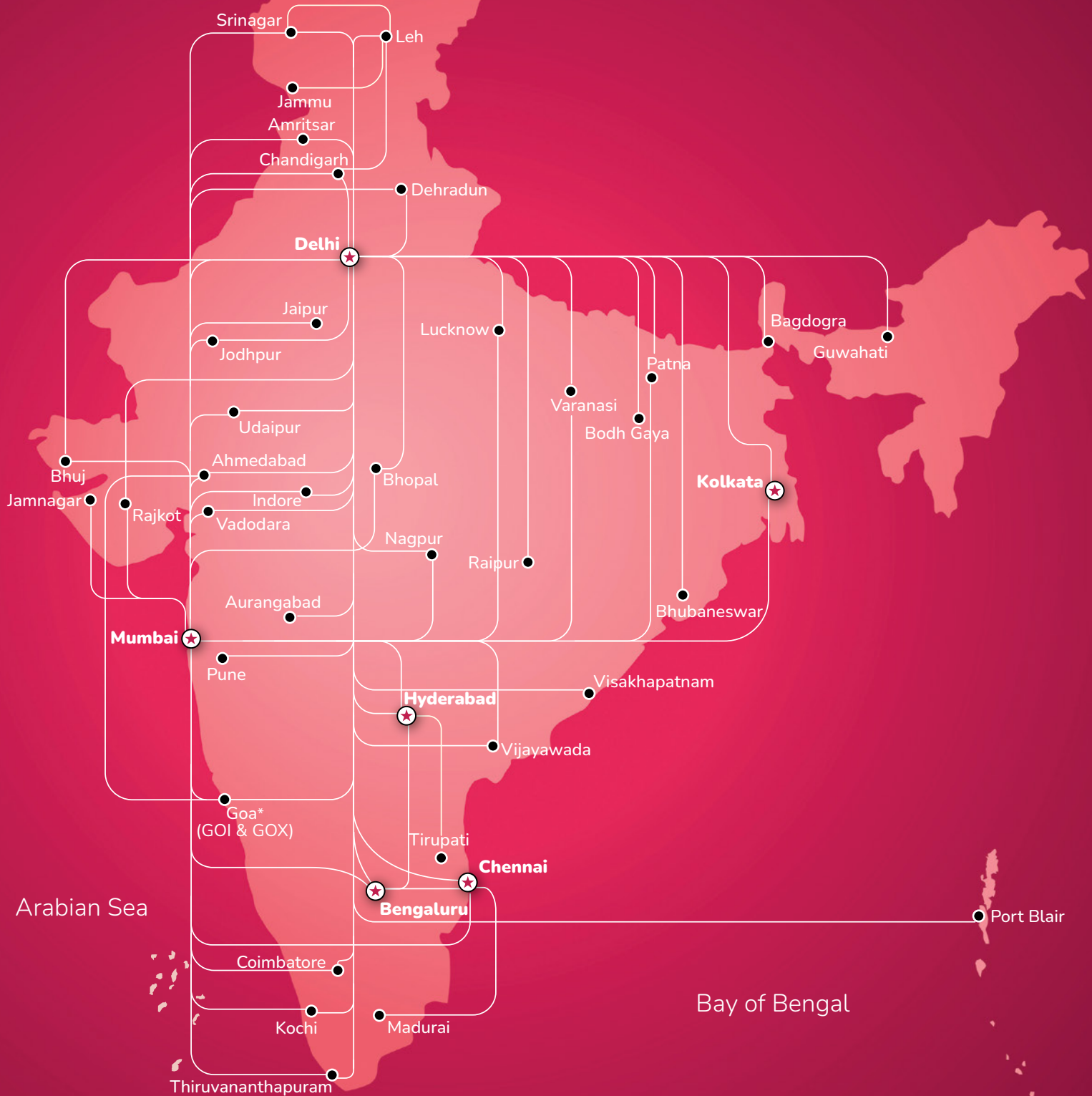
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## DOMESTIC CONNECTIVITY



\*Map not to scale. The depiction and use of routes and boundaries are for informative purposes only

\*This route map pertains only to destinations served by Air India

\*Mumbai-Goa is operational via GOI; Ahmedabad-Goa is operational via GOX; Delhi-Goa is operational via GOI and GOX

\*Route map as on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025

\*This route map is applicable till 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025



# INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Air India flies non-stop to 40 destinations across five continents from multiple Indian cities (pinned on the map of India)

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|                  |        |      |     |
|------------------|--------|------|-----|
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| Copenhagen (CPH) | ←————→ | DEL  |     |
| Frankfurt (FRA)  | ←————→ | DEL  | BOM |
| Milan (MXP)      | ←————→ | DEL  |     |
| Paris (CDG)      | ←————→ | DEL  |     |
| Vienna (VIE)     | ←————→ | DEL  |     |
| Zurich (ZRH)     | ←————→ | DEL  |     |
| Tel Aviv (TLV)   | ←————→ | DEL* |     |

## UK



|                  |        |      |      |         |
|------------------|--------|------|------|---------|
| Birmingham (BHX) | ←————→ | DEL  | ATQ  |         |
| <u>London</u>    |        |      |      |         |
| Heathrow (LHR)   | ←————→ | DEL  | BOM  | BLR AMD |
| Gatwick (LGW)    | ←————→ | ATQ* | AMD* | GOX*    |

## North America



|                     |        |     |         |
|---------------------|--------|-----|---------|
| Chicago (ORD)       | ←————→ | DEL |         |
| Newark (EWR)        | ←————→ | DEL | BOM     |
| New York (JFK)      | ←————→ | DEL | BOM     |
| San Francisco (SFO) | ←————→ | DEL | BOM BLR |
| Toronto (YYZ)       | ←————→ | DEL |         |
| Vancouver (YVR)     | ←————→ | DEL |         |

## Middle East



|                 |        |     |                 |
|-----------------|--------|-----|-----------------|
| Abu Dhabi (AUH) | ←————→ | BOM |                 |
| Dammam (DMM)    | ←————→ | BOM |                 |
| Doha (DOH)      | ←————→ | DEL | BOM             |
| Dubai (DXB)     | ←————→ | DEL | BOM COK HYD MAA |
| Jeddah (JED)    | ←————→ | DEL | BOM             |
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Connect beyond Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru to over 50 Indian destinations with Air India and Air India Express. Please turn to page 97 to see domestic route connectivity via Air India Express.

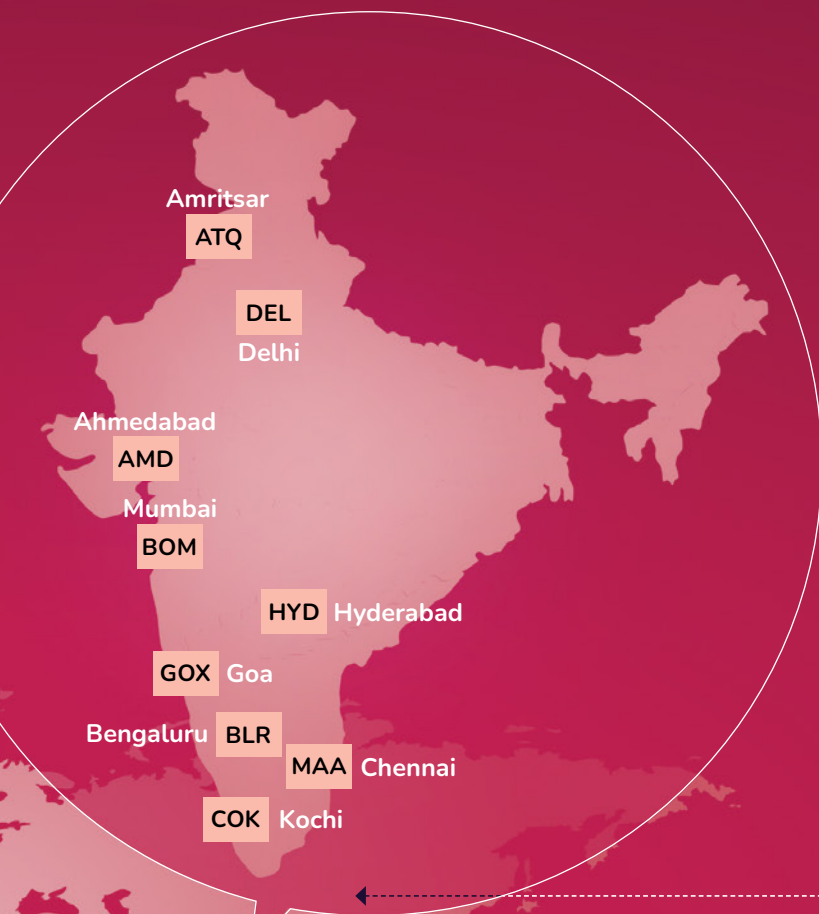
\*Flights to Tel Aviv, and London Gatwick (from Ahmedabad, Amritsar and Goa, Mopa) are temporarily suspended

\*Map not to scale. The depiction and use of routes and boundaries are for informative purposes only

\*This route map pertains only to destinations served by Air India

\*Route map as on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025; This route map is applicable till 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025





## Far East

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Hong Kong (HKG) | ↔ | DEL |
| Seoul (ICN)     | ↔ | DEL |
| Tokyo (HND)     | ↔ | DEL |



## South East Asia

|                        |   |     |     |     |
|------------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Bali (DPS)             | ↔ | DEL |     |     |
| Bangkok (BKK)          | ↔ | DEL | BOM |     |
| Ho Chi Minh City (SGN) | ↔ | DEL |     |     |
| Kuala Lumpur (KUL)     | ↔ | DEL |     |     |
| Phuket (HKT)           | ↔ | DEL |     |     |
| Singapore (SIN)        | ↔ | DEL | BOM | MAA |
| Manila (MNL)           | ↔ | DEL |     |     |



## Australia

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Melbourne (MEL) | ↔ | DEL |
| Sydney (SYD)    | ↔ | DEL |



## Africa

|                 |   |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Mauritius (MRU) | ↔ | BOM |
|-----------------|---|-----|

## Indian Subcontinent

|                 |   |     |     |     |
|-----------------|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Colombo (CMB)   | ↔ | DEL | BOM | MAA |
| Dhaka (DAC)     | ↔ | DEL | BOM |     |
| Kathmandu (KTM) | ↔ | DEL |     |     |
| Malé (MLE)      | ↔ | DEL |     |     |
| Yangon (RGN)    | ↔ | DEL |     |     |






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-  **1** Turn on airplane mode
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-  **3** Scan the QR Code or use your browser to go to the Vista Stream homepage at <https://byod.airindia.com>



### TROUBLESHOOTING

#### If unable to connect:

1. Switch the Wi-Fi off and then on again
2. Restart your device and repeat the steps again

#### If unable to access content:

1. Close and restart your browser, then type in <https://byod.airindia.com>
2. If this does not work, try an alternative browser and type in <https://byod.airindia.com>
3. Power your device off and on, then repeat steps 1 and 2

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### 1. What device can I use to access Vista Stream?

Vista Stream can be accessed with most Android, Windows, and iOS devices (smartphones, laptop or tablets).

#### 2. What browsers can I use to access Vista Stream?

We recommend Safari for iOS and Chrome for Android devices.

#### 3. I'm on the Wi-Fi network, but I can't access the internet.

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#### 4. Why do I see this error message: "This version of Chrome is not supported. Please upgrade to the latest version from the Google Play Store"?

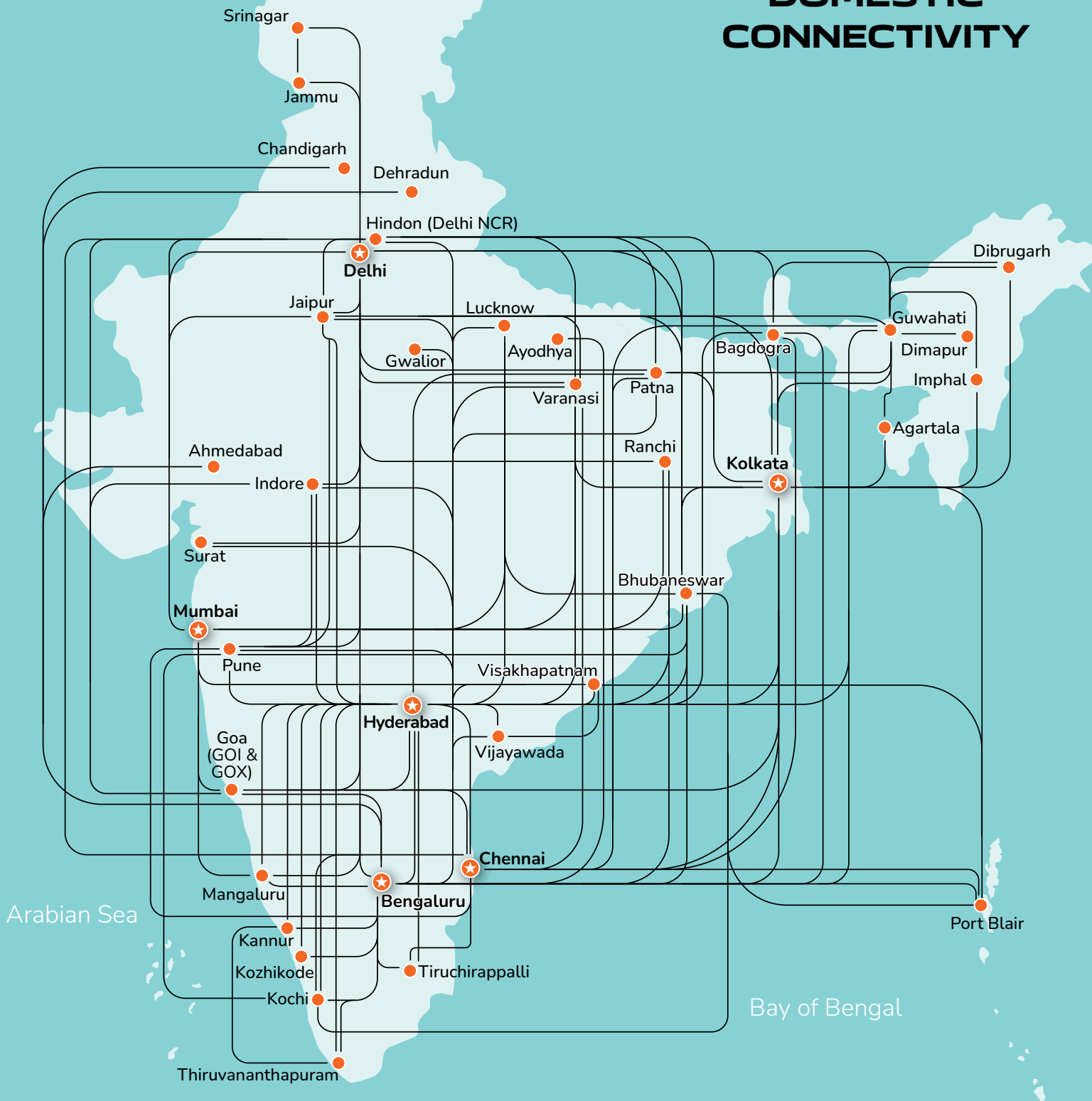
You will need the latest version of Google Chrome to view content. Please update your browser app the next time you have an internet connection.

\*The Vista Stream service will be available only after seat belt signs are turned off. Access to service will be unavailable during take-off and landing.  
\*Vista Stream is currently available on select flights.



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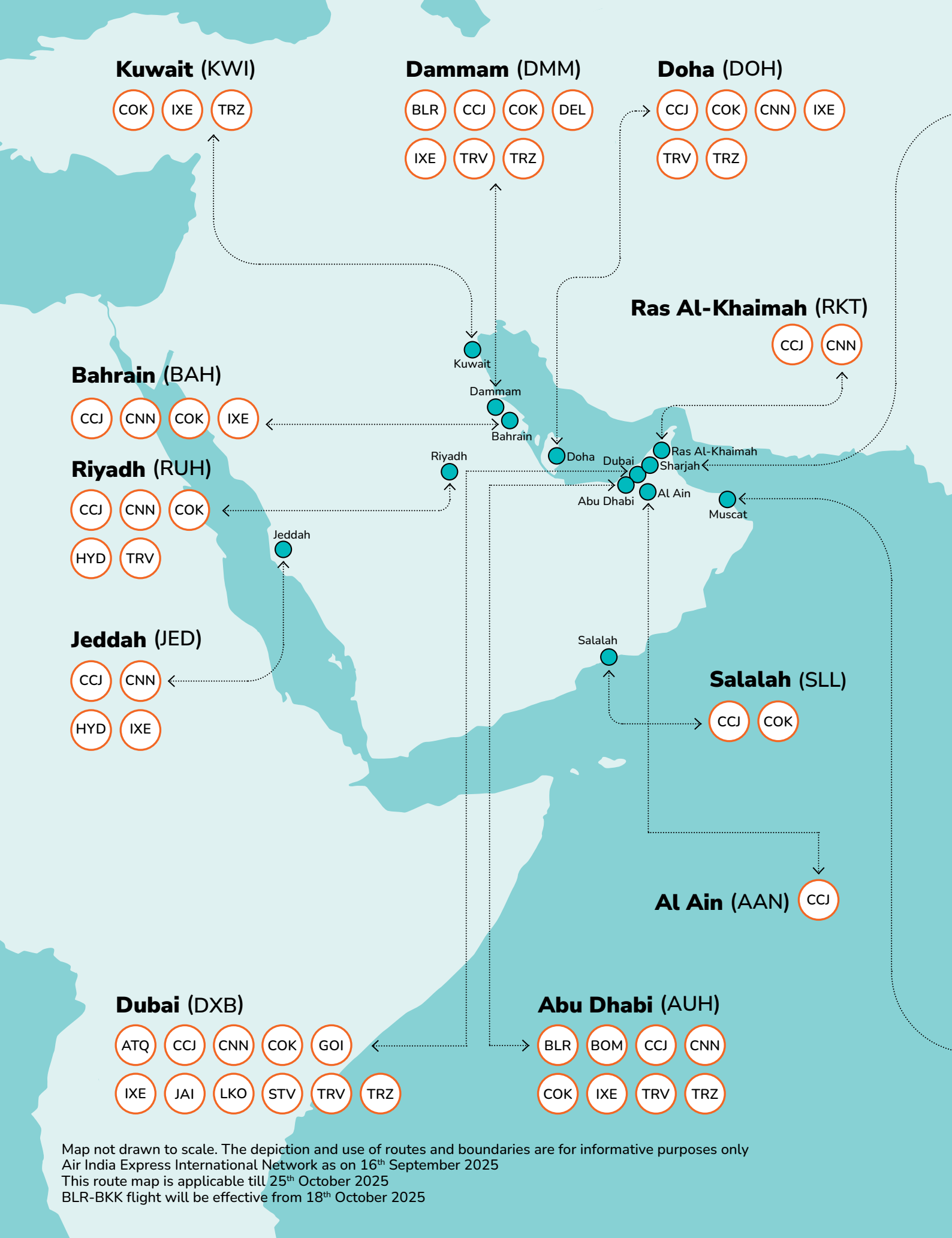
Indian Ocean

Map not to scale. The depiction and use of routes and boundaries are for informative purposes only

Route map as on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025

This route map is applicable till 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025





Map not drawn to scale. The depiction and use of routes and boundaries are for informative purposes only  
Air India Express International Network as on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025  
This route map is applicable till 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025  
BLR-BKK flight will be effective from 18<sup>th</sup> October 2025



# AIR INDIA express

## INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY

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### Kathmandu (KTM)

BLR

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PNQ STV BLR

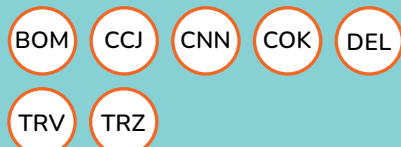
### Phuket (HKT)

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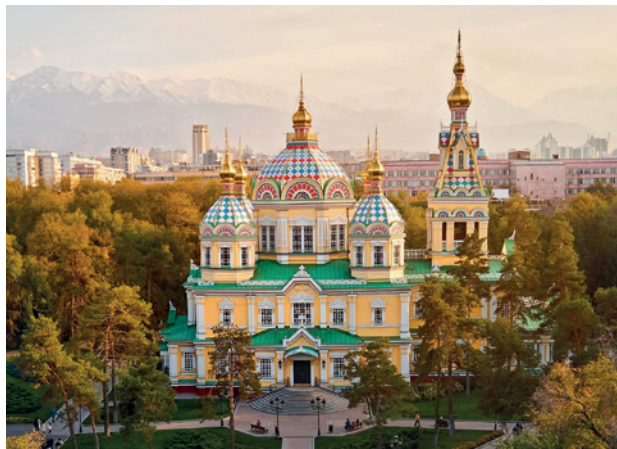
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### BROADCAST REGARDING INDIAN CONSTITUTION

नवंबर 26, 1949 को भारतीय संविधान ऐतिहासिक रूप से अपनाया गया, जो 26 जनवरी, 1950 को लागू हुआ। यह सभी भारतीयों के लिए लोकतंत्र, समानता, और न्याय का प्रतीक है।

November 26, 1949, marks the historic adoption of the Constitution of India, which came into effect on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1950. It is a cornerstone of democracy, equality, and justice for all Indians.

### 150<sup>TH</sup> BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SHRI BIRSA MUNDA

भारतीय आदिवासी स्वतंत्रता सेनानी, श्री बिरसा मुंडा की 150<sup>वीं</sup> जयंती के अवसर पर, हम उनके साहस और राष्ट्र के प्रति सेवा के लिए उनका सम्मान करते हैं।

On the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the iconic tribal freedom fighter from India, Shri Birsa Munda, we express our respect for his unwavering courage and service to the nation.

### MISSION LIFE

मिशन लाइफ, जिसे माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेंद्र मोदी द्वारा शुरू किया गया है, पर्यावरण की सुरक्षा और संरक्षण के लिए लोगों को प्रेरित करने वाला एक वैश्विक जन

आंदोलन है। इसका मकसद लोगों को पर्यावरण के प्रति जागरूक करना और उन्हें पर्यावरण की रक्षा के लिए कदम उठाने के लिए प्रेरित करना है।

Mission LiFE is a global mass movement, launched by Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, to inspire people to protect and conserve the environment. Its purpose is to make people aware of the environment and motivate them to take steps to protect the environment.

### AIR-SEWA

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने अपने एयर-सेवा पोर्टल को अपग्रेड किया है जो उपयोगकर्ताओं को ऑनलाइन शिकायतें जमा करने, ट्रैक करने और भारत में हवाई यात्रा के बारे में जानकारी प्राप्त करने की अनुमति देता है। सेवा संबंधी किसी और जानकारी के लिए, आप [airsewa.gov.in](http://airsewa.gov.in) पर लॉगिन कर सकते हैं।

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has upgraded its Air Sewa portal that allows users to submit and track grievances/complaints online and get information about air travel in India. For any further service-related information, you can login to [airsewa.gov.in](http://airsewa.gov.in)

### DIGI YATRA

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय द्वारा प्रमुख हवाई अड्डों जैसे दिल्ली, बंगलुरु, वाराणसी, पुणे, कोलकाता, विजयवाड़ा, हैदराबाद, अहमदाबाद, मुंबई, जयपुर, लखनऊ, गुवाहाटी, कोची और अन्य के लिए, डिजी यात्रा की सुविधा शुरू की गई है। डिजी यात्रा ऐप डाउनलोड करके खुद को नामांकित करें, और इन हवाई अड्डों पर बिना रुकावट के यात्रा का अनुभव करें।

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has introduced Digi Yatra facilities at major

airports, including Delhi, Bengaluru, Varanasi, Pune, Kolkata, Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Jaipur, Lucknow, Guwahati, Kochi, and others. This platform aims to provide a seamless, hassle-free experience for travellers. To avail of this facility, simply download the Digi Yatra app and complete your registration.

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हवाई अड्डों पर और उड़ान संचालन के दौरान, विशेष रूप से 10,000 फीट से नीचे हवाई और ज़मीनी फोटोग्राफी और वीडियोग्राफी पर प्रतिबंध है। यह प्रतिबंध टर्मिनलों, विमानों और हवाई अड्डों के आसपास के क्षेत्रों सहित विभिन्न स्थानों पर लागू होता है, जैसे की:

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- विमान के बाहर;
- लैंडिंग के दौरान;
- हवाई अड्डे पर;
- पुशबैक, टैक्सीइंग, टेक-ऑफ के दौरान, और जब विमान 10,000 फीट से नीचे उड़ रहा हो।

Please be informed that aerial or ground photography and videography are strictly prohibited at all times during a passenger's travel, including when he or she is inside the terminal; in vehicles en route to or from the aircraft; outside the aircraft; during landing; at the airport; during pushback, taxiing, take-off, and while the aircraft is flying below 10,000 feet.



# SEAMLESS TRAVEL

India recently introduced the 'Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP)' to speed up Immigration Clearance for international travellers. The objective behind this implementation is to promote international mobility by developing world-class immigration facilities. The programme will be executed in two phases, with the first one (already in action) covering Indian nationals and OCI card holders. In the second phase, foreign travellers would be covered.

Currently, this facility is available at the following airports: Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kochi, and Ahmedabad. Subsequently, it will be implemented at other major airports, namely Lucknow, Kozhikode, Thiruvananthapuram, Navi Mumbai, Mopa, Jaipur, and Mangaluru.

## HOW TO REGISTER



**Applicant will apply online for Trusted Traveller Programme (TTP) Service ([www.ftittp.mha.gov.in](http://www.ftittp.mha.gov.in))**



**Processing of Application by Bureau of Immigration (BoI)**



**Biometrics enrolment of the approved applicants**



**Applicant is registered under TTP**



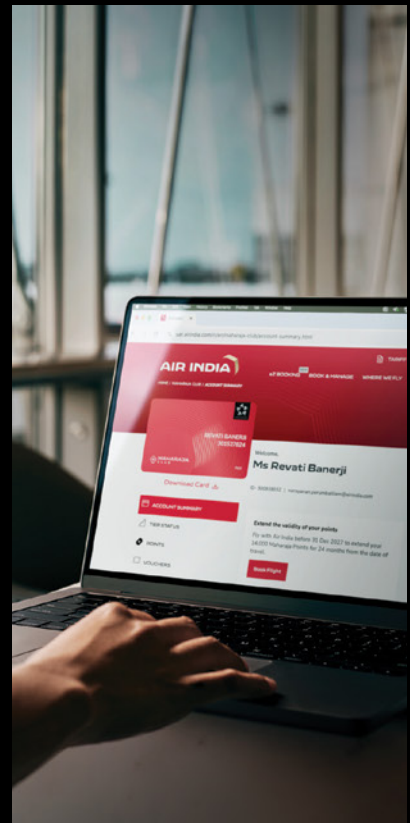
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# A TRAVELLER'S TALE

## NATURAL WONDERS

Actor-singer **Taaruk Raina** recalls the pristine beauty of Norway

### AN UNFORGETTABLE MEMORY

It has to be my holiday to Norway in 2022. It is such an incredibly diverse country—be it in terms of the landscape or the scenery.

### MY LOCAL EXPERIENCE

I decided to hike up to Trolltunga but when I went to buy waterproof clothing, the shopkeeper's reaction was: "Why on earth would you do that to yourself?" He was surprised because even though Norway has a fitness culture, that peak is considered challenging and I, a tourist, wanted to attempt it. Though the trek was a tad tough, it was worth it because it was the most beautiful sight I have seen.

### A FARE TO REMEMBER

We thoroughly enjoyed the seafood, especially in Bergen. We had this sort of Norwegian 'seafood boil' at the port and it was delicious.

### I RECOMMEND

I think the harder a place is to reach, the more beautiful it is. So, do drop by Geirangerfjord and Trolltunga, or the picturesque town of Odda. The Lofoten Islands deserve a visit too.

— As told to **Shrabasti Anindita Mallik**



Taaruk Raina: Self. Rest: Shutterstock



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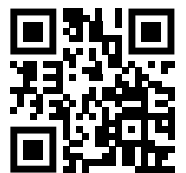
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