

## AITTC Newsletter

### Issue No : 14 - Mar- Apr 2015

We welcome you to the third issue of our bi-monthly newsletter for 2015, hoping the year is progressing well with bi lateral travel.

Good news for us as our membership is rising. We welcome Sydney Airports Corporation, Wendy Wu Travel and Accor Hotels as our new corporate members. Their participation strengthens position of AITTC in the industry and we look forward to their respective contributions to move AITTC forward.

One of the strategic agenda of AITTC is to educate the industry on India and Australia and regularly update them with the latest developments. In line with that, an event in partnership with India Tourism was held in May to update front office staff of Australian travel and tour operators selling India products. Titled as "Know India Better", the evening function was attended by over 25 agents and operators. AITTC member organizations, Insight Vacations, Taj Hotels, Air India along with India Tourism provided information on various travel and tour opportunities in India. Travel trade media welcomed this as a great initiative from AITTC. This event will be an ongoing one with many more to come in future.



NSW government is strengthening its relationship with India by implementing its India Strategies which includes growing two way tourism. Driven by Destination NSW successful implementation of this strategy targets the value of tourism from India to NSW to \$0.5 billion by 2020. Discussion with Destination NSW has commenced to identify avenues where AITTC can be of assistance to achieve this target. Suggestions if any from members and other stakeholders are welcome on this matter.

The Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE), Australia's largest annual travel and tourism business-to-business event will be held in Melbourne from 21-25 June. It brings together Australia's tourism industry in a forum to showcase their products directly to tourism wholesalers and retailers from around the world, through a combination of scheduled business appointments and networking events. A large contingent of operators from India are expected to attend this event and AITTC to liaise with them to offer support from Australia.

We are still working on strategic events for this year. High on consideration is the interactive industry wide symposium to identify issues and potential solutions for growth of bilateral tourism. In this context we sincerely request our members and stakeholders to make suggestions on future AITTC events that may be beneficial to the industry. Opportunities for sponsoring any of our events are available, so if interested to contribute then please do not hesitate contact us.

**Provided below is some more industry news that may be of importance to you:**

#### **International visitor arrival to Australia**

As per ABS data released recently, visitors from India in January 2015 were 15400 compared to 11400 last year, an increase of 35.1%. For the year ended 31 January 2015 total visitor numbers for the 12 month period were 200600 compared to 169200 last period, an increase of 18.6 %. Based on January 2015 arrival data, India is ranked 9 , New Zealand topping the list with China and USA following.

#### **Gold Coast to host Australian Tourism Exchange in 2016**

Tourism Australia has announced that Queensland's Gold Coast will play host to the country's largest annual tourism trade show - the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) - in 2016. ATE is Australia's annual business-to-business tourism travel trade event, which brings together around 600 travel wholesalers and agents from more than 30 countries to meet and do business with 1,500 Australian tourism seller delegates from 500 companies. This year's Australian Tourism Exchange, ATE15, takes place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre between 21 and 25 June 2015. The event sees a 20 per cent increase in international buyers compared to last year as well as the highest number of new sellers in over ten years, including around 100 new Australian tourism products who are participating at ATE for the first time ever.



#### **Dreamtime 2015 to be hosted in Adelaide, South Australia**

Dreamtime is another large trade marketing event which Australian travel and tourism industry us to connect with qualified buyers from key markets including Greater China, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, New Zealand, USA and the United Kingdom. It will be held at Adelaide Convention Bureau.

#### **Festivals & Events in Sydney**

In the current two months, Sydney is thriving with festivals of different kinds and several major sporting events and competitions. Unquestionably the most significant is Vivid Sydney, the world's largest annual festival of lights, music and ideas. This year the 18 nights long festival is bigger with 60 light installations that has been attracting large number of visitors from other states and overseas. "Illuminated by

our spectacular Vivid Sydney festival, Sydney truly comes alive during winter”, says Sandra Chipchase CEO Destination NSW. Last year the event attracted 1.43 million attendees.



Overlapping the appeal of Vivid Sydney during the same period are the Sydney Writers Festival and Sydney Film festival, both of which draw attention of literary and cinema aficionados and key sporting events like the Australian Badminton Open which saw participation by a number of top ranking Indian shuttlers from India and friendly soccer matches between Sydney FC and English Premier League Champion Chelsea FC and earlier with famous Tottenham Hotspur. All of the above brings the city to life creating a spectacular backdrop for visitors and locals alike.



### Brand revamp for Accor

Accor, the world's leading hotel operator, becomes AccorHotels and adopts a new signature. With its new name, AccorHotels, the Group proudly upholds its hospitality business. It aims at increasing the clout and visibility of AccorHotels, which is both an institutional and a commercial brand, by connecting it to its digital platform AccorHotels.com. It also intends to place the brand at the center of its ecosystem of hotel brands. The Group also has a new simple, striking and universal signature that emphasizes on its desire to federate: Feel Welcome, which encapsulates the generosity and the very essence of hospitality. It is a promise addressed to all our audiences: customers, employees and partners, so that they feel expected, unique and privileged.



The new brand platform is also upheld by a Group's manifesto which includes a semantic charter so that the brand's personality can be reflected in every public address. The new visuals reflecting the spirit of service in the Group's hotels and an original brand's musical identity come to supplement this new brand platform. This reputed hotelier has properties both in Australia and India.

### **Direct Air India flights from Sydney**

**Air India now operates direct flights from Sydney to Delhi on and from Melbourne on.....**

Sydney Airport has welcomed Air India's decision to make Sydney a standalone destination for its four weekly services from Delhi. Managing director and CEO of Sydney Airport Kerrie Mather said the direct Sydney-India service "will improve convenience for a growing number of passengers"



## Know India Better

On Tuesday the 26th of May, the AITTC in partnership with India Tourism and with support from its members Taj Hotels, Insight Vacations and Air India began the 'Know India Better' seminars for front-line Travel Agents. These are small and intimate functions where travel agents can learn about India, flights and hotels, from senior members of India Tourism, Air India and hoteliers. This is the first of a number to be held in 2015.

Authentic Indian food was served with traditional Indian red wine. Travel agents from Diploma Travel, Flight Centre, Thornleigh Cruise and Travel, Golden Global International Travel, Trans Am Travel, Travel Managers, Worldstar Travel, Mobile Travel Agents, Baulkham Hills Travel, Reho Travel, Helloworld Carlingford and other Helloworld agencies and Travel Managers attended.



Vibhava Tripathi, Director of India Tourism in Sydney, introduced India and its lesser-known activities for tourists, including biking and golf. Joost Timmer from Insight Vacations spoke about India Tour packages. Marie Anderson spoke about Air India, the only non-stop carrier between Australia and Delhi, and Ben Johnson from Taj Group spoke about their luxury hotels, spas and safaris in India.

Sandip Hor, Chairman of the AITTC said: "This was another successful event organised by the AITTC, where we have worked with partners to inform the trade about India. This event is the first of its kind.

The AITTC will introduce a help desk to feature on its website, as part of this educational program to help the industry.”

India is one of the fastest growing and most popular destinations for Australian travellers. The India Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVoA) introduced last year, enabled by Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA), has made it easier than ever to obtain a Visa for India, and will see an increase the number of travellers to India.

The event received extensive media coverage, links to some which are provided below:

<http://karryon.com.au/lifestyle/paparazzi/agents-get-to-know-india-better/>  
<http://www.eglobaltravelmedia.com.au/know-india-better-seminars-launch-at-india-tourism/>  
<http://australia.etbtravelnews.com/251603/travel-agents-now-know-india-better/>  
<https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/traveldaily/TD/2015/Jun15/td040615.pdf>

### **Tourist arrivals in India**

Following a record year in 2014, tourist arrivals to India kept climbing in January 2015, albeit at a slower pace. According to the latest data from the country’s Ministry of Tourism & Culture, India welcomed 790,000 overseas visitors, 4% more than the 720,000 recorded in January 2014. Once again the USA was India’s largest source market, accounting for 16.4% of total visitors in January 2015. The UK (11.8%) was second, followed by Bangladesh (9.3%), Canada (4.7%), Australia (3.6%) and Russia (3.5%). Mumbai and Delhi airports handled more than 50% of inbound visitors during the month, with Chennai, Bengaluru and Goa airports the next busiest. In terms of tourism revenues, India generated INR115.29 billion (US\$1.85bn) during the month, which also marked a year-on-year increase of 4%.



India welcomed a record 7.5m international visitors in 2014, up 7% compared to 2013

### **New India High Commissioner to Australia**



AITTC welcomes Mr. Navdeep Suri as the New Indian High Commissioner to Australia. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1983 and has served in India's diplomatic missions in Cairo, Damascus, Washington, Dar es Salaam and London and as India's Consul General in Johannesburg. He has also headed the West Africa and Public Diplomacy divisions at the Ministry of External Affairs. He was India's Ambassador to Egypt prior to his present assignment. His innovative use of social media in public diplomacy has received extensive recognition and two prestigious awards.

### **Indian Cultural Centre**

The Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) is the cultural wing of the Consulate General of India in Sydney. It started its activities since Feb/March 2015, in accordance with the announcement made by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, during his public address at Sydney on November 17, 2014.

The ICC is located in the premises of the Consulate. The centre offers facilities for courses like Yoga, Hindi Language, Dance and Music. The centre also has a huge and varied collection of books in its library. The objective of the centre is to promote Indian culture, disseminate information about India and its various facets and foster closer cultural links between India and Australia. The centre is open to all, including Australian Nationals, members of Indian community and expatriate, who are welcome to join ICC's various activities.

### **International Yoga Day**

Accepting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's proposal, United Nations has declared 21 June as Annual World Yoga Day. To commemorate that special day in Sydney, Indian Consulate has organized a day of yoga celebrations at the Taronga Zoo Function Centre. The half day event will include lecture, prayers and demonstration of some yoga practices. Registration is open to all via [yoga@indianconsulatesydney.org](mailto:yoga@indianconsulatesydney.org)



### **E-Tourist Visa for Travel to India**

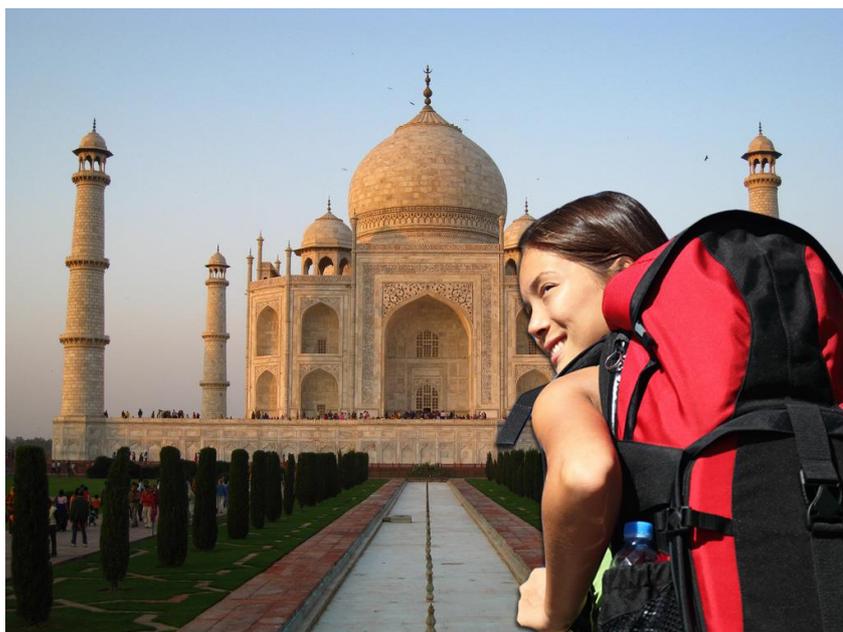
Australian passport holders can obtain Indian e-Tourist visa online, instead of applying by sending in your original passport and documents. The e-Tourist visa approval will be issued in advance electronically, before the date of travel to India; the actual visa sticker will be placed inside passport at the airport on arrival in India. This visa is issued for a single entry with a duration of stay up to 30 days. A maximum of two Indian e-Visas can be issued for the same traveler within one year.

### **Solo Female Traveller to India**

Reena Tory, Chief Experience Officer, Mantra Wild Adventures and a member of AITTC was recently interviewed about travelling to India safely as a solo female traveler by Y Travel Blog - Australia's number 1 travel blogger and top 10 globally is hosting this webinar. Check below for details:

Blog link: [t.co/bkcd1VW62l](https://t.co/bkcd1VW62l) and

Webinar registration link: <http://app.webinarjam.net/register/14415/7145e7a701>, 10am next Thursday.



## **Commemorative events in India**

The Indian government has unveiled plans to hold a year-long series of celebrations to commemorate some of the country's leading historical figures. The country's National Implementation Committee for Commemorations (NIC) held its first meeting in New Delhi recently, to discuss the commemoration schedule for this year.

Celebrations are planned to mark the births of four historical figures: Rani Gaidinliu, the spiritual and political leader who led a revolt against British rule in India; Lala Lajpat Rai, a Punjabi politician who was an important figure in the independence movement; Tatya Tope, an Brahmin leader who led the Indian Rebellion in the 1800s; and Maharana Pratap, the former ruler of Mewar, or present-day Rajasthan. Other events will mark the birth of Bhisham Sahni, a prominent 20th Century Hindi writer, playwright and actor, and the 500th anniversary of the return of Hindu monk Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to Vrindavan.

## **10th anniversary celebrations for Spice Jet**

The low-cost carrier launched its first commercial flight between New Delhi and Ahmedabad on 23 May 2005. And despite some difficult times, Spice Jet remains after a decade as one of India's leading airlines today, operating 245 daily flights to 41 destinations, including seven international cities, and using a fleet of 20 Boeing 737 and 15 Bombardier Q400 aircraft.



## **Cruise news -Market penetration reaches 4.2% - the biggest in the world.**

More than one million Australian passengers took a cruise last year, with the milestone reached more than five years earlier than the previous forecasts of 2020. Cruise Lines International Association Australasia (CLIA) has just released its 2014 cruise industry statistics, with yet another record year reflecting the ongoing growth of the Australasian cruise sector. The total tally was 1,003,256 - up a hefty 20.4% - and the South Pacific the most popular destination, with 39% of Australians taking a cruise through the region. Australia now makes up 4.5% of the total global cruise market. River cruising in India on the Brahmaputra, Ganges and Kerala backwaters are high on the agenda.



### **AITTC Honorary Solicitor**

Solicitor and Barrister Janki Advani Bhandary has joined the association as Honorary Solicitor. Her legal practice specialises in corporate and commercial law, property and conveyancing, and immigration and family law. She is also a practising solicitor and advocate in India in similar fields. She can be contacted by emailing [bhandaryl原因y@gmail.com](mailto:bhandaryl原因y@gmail.com) or calling 0430 119 486.

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News items has been sourced from various media releases