

INDO ASIA DIARIES

Issue 11 | Feb 2016



INDO ASIA TOURS

Since 1987

FRAMED

CROSSING
CULTURES

TOP
SPOT

NEWS
& VIEWS

IA SAYS

Image courtesy: Nikkul



Francesca Mity

The Chitrashala (art gallery) inside the fort of Bundi in Rajasthan, is what made Francesca Mity stay back yet another day in the low-key town of the state. ***Bundi is usually a day trip on the itinerary in Rajasthan, but when the 23-year-old American traveller cast her eyes on the intricate frescoes in this section, she extended her time to take in this marvelous work of art from 18th century, at a slower pace.*** It was the stunning architecture of the gallery and the manicured gardens that drew her in, till the wonder of frescoes took over. The other thing that left her spellbound were the baoris (step wells) that dot the town – there are over 50 of them in the old city area. The best way to explore the town is to trust your feet and hunch and follow where your heart takes you.



NUDGE THE STORYTELLER IN YOU
TO SUBMIT A PHOTOGRAPH FROM
YOUR TRAVELS AND WIN A TRIP TO
EXPLORE THE MARVELS OF INDIA.

CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT

FRAMED

CHITRASHALA, THE MAGNIFICENT ART GALLERY

Photo Location : Bundi Fort, Rajasthan

FRAMED

CROSSING
CULTURES

TOP
SPOT

NEWS
& VIEWS

IA SAYS



Uppada holds sway for some of the most simple but gorgeous weaves of Andhra Pradesh

CROSSING CULTURES

WEAVING MAGIC IN THE VILLAGES OF INDIA

OFFBEAT IDEAS TO STEP INTO 2016

For travellers, India is considered a pilgrimage for scouting stunning textiles – in colours, designs and types. ***The country unravels a wide variety of weaving traditions that unfold as part of the vivid culture of the country. Almost all states of the country have a weaving tradition that showcases a glimpse of the state’s history.*** Kanjivaram, Uppada, Ikat and many more weaves metamorphose into saris, table covers, runners and curtains, giving the traveller a large variety to choose from. Here are some hubs that produce some of the most mesmerizing textiles.

Chettinad

Cotton is the choice of fabric for the Chettinad weavers of Tamil Nadu. Drawing from the heritage of the town, the Chettinad saris are steeped in vibrant colours and designs. The sound of looms is a constant backdrop to the ancient mansions that fill the scape of the town. In the courtyards of homes, one can see reams of fabric emerge from the looms of weavers. Sitting in these sunny courtyards are ladies with spinning wheels and big smiles of their faces – a photographer’s delight.

Varanasi

17th century can be pegged as the time when Varanasi found its calling as a silk weaving centre. Now it holds sway in the intricate jacquards that are exported in flourish all over the world. Small hubs of weavers are found across the city, where the clickety clack of looms unfolds them in the ancient craft. Saris from Varanasi find their way into International markets, and more prevalently into the trousseaus of Indian brides.

Kanjivaram

Walk down the dusty road of Kanchipuram and you can hear the musical looms in the distance. ***Detour into a***



The vibrant colours of Naga weaves add happy tribals narrow lane and a world of rich silk and designs unfold. Kanjivarm saris are Tamil Nadu’s weaving showcases, which draw from the temple other cultural motifs. This is one of the most popular weaving centers of the state, a definite addition to the itineraries for culture enthusiasts.

Nagaland

Walk into the markets of Kohima and a blast of red and black meets the eyes. ***Locals cover themselves with these colours, in the form of thick woven shawls, often infused with tribal designs – spears and weapons also find their way into the patterns.*** The ‘naga shawl’ is a souvenir that one must pick from the state.

Uppada

The unassuming village in Andhra Pradesh found a place on the travel map of the state, when the weaves from here made a foray into the market. ***Intricately woven but subtly designed, the Uppada saris cannot be missed.*** This also gives one the opportunity to see life in a village at close quarters.

A photograph of the Pride Plaza Hotel at dusk. The building is a modern, multi-story structure with a facade of light-colored stone or concrete panels and large glass windows. The name "PRIDE PLAZA HOTEL" is illuminated in white capital letters on the upper part of the building. The entrance area is also illuminated, with the name "PRIDE PLAZA HOTEL" repeated in white capital letters above the entrance. The building is lit up with warm yellow lights, and the sky is a soft, hazy blue.

PRIDE PLAZA HOTEL

*Hotel Pride Plaza
Perfect to explore the
celebrated city of Delhi*

**TOP
SPOT**

FRAMED

CROSSING
CULTURES

**TOP
SPOT**

NEWS
& VIEWS

IA SAYS

INDO ASIA TOURS

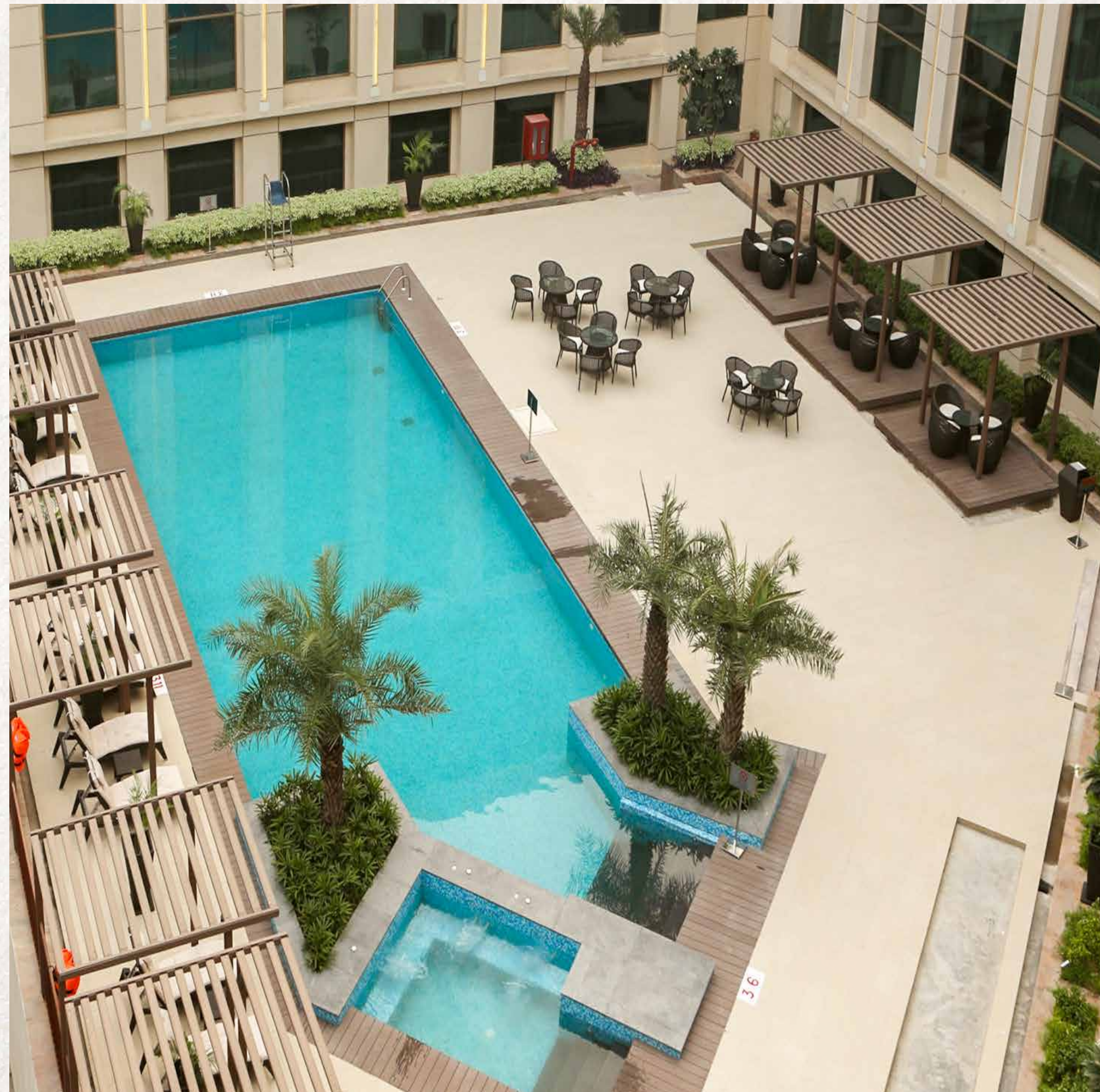


Located in the Aerocity hub close to the International Airport, Hotel Pride Plaza offers exemplary hospitality and great connectivity.

Highlights include:

- A wide array of room types to choose from
- Soothing aesthetics
- Central location to explore Delhi with ease
- Serene swimming pool to relax by
- An excellent dining experience in five restaurants
- Signature amenities and facilities
- Optimum rates guaranteed
- Extensive conference and banquet facilities
- Well-appointed spa facilities to pamper your senses

**TOP
SPOT**





SUPRIYA SEHGAL

Footloose in Delhi

Understanding the rhythm of Delhi.

Delhi, the capital of the largest democracy in the world, is bound to take you on an adventure. In many ways, it is the essence of modern India, with its overwhelming paradox of the old and new – something that a cosmopolitan city is bound to have in its DNA. From ancient monuments to glitzy malls and sprawling lush parks to beehive like concrete structures, the city promises to arrest your senses. Here are some of the picks in the city that Supriya ensures, will not disappoint you. Start exploring in concentric circles from the centre of the city and see the imprint of various dynasties that have left their mark on the city.

Here are some of the picks in the city that we ensure, will not disappoint you, and orient you to the different aspects of the city.

Chandi Chowk Area

Choked with shoppers, rickshaws, people heading to Jama Masjid (mosque) and travellers, Chandni Chowk is Delhi’s most overwhelming yet pulsating place that is essential to draw one into the fold of the city. *It lies in the old city area across Red Fort and encapsulates the energy that the city runs on. Weathered buildings cast permanent shadows on slim lanes that are packed with clothes, jewellery, textiles, utensils and what feels like, everything under the sun.* An early morning walk through the spice market, Jama Masjid, the bird hospital and a Gurudwara will make for one of the most enriching walks ever.

Humayun’s Tomb

The city’s first Mughal mausoleum, Humayun’s Tomb was constructed to house the remains of the second Mughal emperor. It was built by Haji Begum, his senior widow who is buried alongside her husband. *The elegant structure is reminiscent of the Taj Mahal in Agra,*



Humayun's Tomb from the entrance.

the only difference being, that this is constructed in red sandstone and inlaid with black and white marble. The manicured lawns of the structure are a great place to sunbathe in the wintery chill and take in the effect of the stunning architectural skill.



Goa Pavillion at the Kingdom of Dreams

Kingdom of Dreams

A live Bollywood themed musical, Kingdom of Dreams is a showcase of the vibrant dance and music pop culture of India. Add to this, there is a semi open air food court that is dotted with stalls from different states. The cuisines represent the tastes from different corners of India – an excellent idea to try out a variety of flavours. This is a perfect option to spend an evening in the capital of the country.

Delhi on a Segway

The Segway craze has hit India too and it couldn’t be better news for those who love a snazzy set of wheels when they are discovering a city. *Explore India on wheels from the Secretariat Building to India*

Gate, the two iconic structures in the centre of the city. This is a smooth ride, considering the roads are immaculate and one is well covered with proper gear and led by an instructor. The buildings that fall on the way are, the Secretariats, Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Parliament and India Gate.

Qutab Minar

A slice of history with superlative statistics, the Qutab Minar promises to enthrall. *This is the tallest brick minarety in the world, and the second tallest tower in India.* The tall structure and the sprawl of ruins around make for an atmospheric trip for a couple of hours. The 13th century monument lies juxtaposed with the cosmopolitan vibe of the city. A few hours are ample to take in the anecdotes about its construction.



The tallest brick minarety in the world.

TOP SPOT

Port Blair Gets Connected by GoAir Via Night Flights



Introduction of chartered flights by GoAir from Bengaluru to Port Blair optimizes time for travellers from January 2016 onwards. The first

flight took off from Bengaluru on January 20 before midnight, and landed at Port Blair airport at 01:50 hrs. The air carrier has decided to operate three night flights in this sector in January, five night flights in February and six night flights in March. This takes care of the heavy traffic of tourists that want to visit the cluster of serene islands off Port Blair, in the Andaman Sea. All flights will arrive at Port Blair from Bengaluru at 1.50 am and depart for Bengaluru from Port Blair VSI Airport at 2.20 am. When the summer schedule rolls out in end of March, GoAir will also start operating its first ever daily direct flights to Port Blair from Bengaluru in the day. The Andaman Islands are popular for their pristine beaches, snorkelling and scuba diving opportunities in the magical corals off the shores. A number of travellers visit here in the winters to get sun, sand and an insight into the most farflung part of India.

December 2016 marks the year of Sikkim's air connectivity



Improving connectivity to remote, but remarkable tourism destinations in the North East of the country is the focus for the Tourism Ministry this year. The state of Sikkim is all set to get its own airport in Pakyong, 35 km away from the capital, Gangtok. The airport will be inaugurated by the end of the year in 2016. Road connectivity is yet another agenda, which is key to enhancing the North East experience for travellers. The announcement was made at the 4th International Tourism Mart (ITM), a trade fair that is organised by the Union Ministry of Tourism in association with the Northeastern states. With gargantuan efforts being made to showcase the rich and untapped potential of the Northeastern states, this only means that this is a whole new dimension of India for world travellers to explore. Sikkim was declared the first 100% organic state in the country in January and has a massive potential for travellers to enjoy a pristine Himalayan base, which is an excellent pick for trekking and adventure. The cleanliness and 'no smoking drive' of Sikkim have pegged it as one of the best destinations for the year 2016.

Kurseong to open a 100-room Eastin Hotel in April

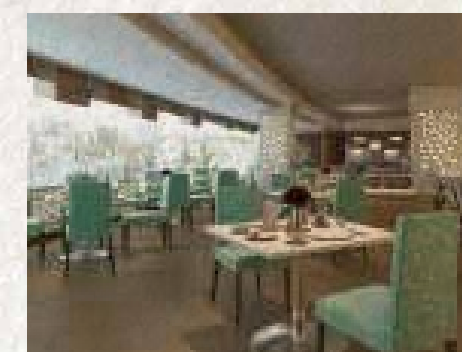
Thailand's Absolute Hotel Services (AHS) is rapidly expanding its high-end Eastin hotel brand in the country, with the launch of a new property in Darjeeling in the eastern state of West Bengal. Kurseong is a low-key



destination but holds the promise of many wonders – tea estates, a stunning countryside, great weather and remnants of British history in India. Located on top of a mountain and surrounded by stunning views of the valleys and foothills of Kurseong, the hotel will open its doors in April 2016. Kurseong is known as the land of white orchids and is relatively unexplored by the travellers. The hotel promises to amp up the infrastructure for this unassuming town, ensuring footfalls to one of the most gorgeous destinations of the east. The property will offer a total of 100 stay options, consisting of rooms and suites. It will also have a signature all day dining restaurant, a vegetarian restaurant, lounge bar, café on the terrace, banquet and meeting centre for the MICE market. A wellness centre, including one double and two spa treatment rooms, foot massage, Ayurvedic massage, gym, meditation and yoga classes is on the cards. This is not the first property of the AHS group. A collection of Eastin, Eastin Easy and U Hotels are already present in several locations across India. A standardized experience from the house of AHS brings credible services to the guest. This particular property is a re-branded Eastin Hotel Kurseong, Darjeeling, from its earlier name Eastin Easy Kurseong Darjeeling. It is the first international 4-star deluxe resort hotel in Kurseong.

Udaipur gets Radisson's credible services with 56 rooms

The lake city of Udaipur has yet another stalwart in the hospitality sector with Radisson Udaipur having opened its doors to welcome guests. The city already has a large array of high-end hotels that cater to guests.



Radisson's foray into the destination, enhances the infrastructure by many folds. The hotel is located in the heart of Udaipur at the Lake City Mall. The Chief Executive Officer, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, said, "Radisson Udaipur is our second hotel in the city of Udaipur and we are honoured to be partnering with Riddhi Siddhi Group for this beautiful addition to our portfolio of 75 operational hotels and 45 under various stages of development." This is the maiden hospitality venture in India by the Riddhi Siddhi Group. Radisson Udaipur offers 56 well-appointed rooms and suites with central heating and cooling. This is much needed as the city faces both harsh summers and a taste of desert like winters. All rooms have amenities like workstation, cordless phone, LED satellite television, tea/coffee maker, electronic safe and Dove amenities. In addition, all rooms feature free Wi-Fi Internet access for guests to keep connected. The hotel also features flexible meeting spaces including a banquet hall measuring above 3,000 sq. ft., one multi-cuisine restaurant, a Lounge Bar, 24-hour In-Room dining service and a Fitness Centre. The All Day Dining restaurant – Season's Café at the hotel, serves mouth-watering Indian and continental cuisine for breakfast, lunch and dinner and drinks. A relaxing dip in the swimming pool or sweating it out at the gym is on the cards after a day of sightseeing. Udaipur holds a large draw for travellers to Rajasthan and is a key city on the circuit. Extensive services hold a great charm for travellers who want to take it slow and explore areas around Udaipur as well.

NEWS&VIEWS



MEET US AT



Indo Asia Tours is participating in the below mentioned upcoming trade fairs in 2016. You can schedule an appointment at marketing@indoasiatours.com to meet us in person at these fairs :

- ITB Berlin : 09 – 13 March 2016

IA SAYS



Keeping in tune with the promise of unfolding the lesser-known gems of India and the subcontinent to your clients, this month I want to talk about the geographical heart of India –Madhya Pradesh. With a diverse set of experiences from history to adventure, ***the awe-inspiring state makes for a definite inclusion in the itineraries of most first-time visitors to the country.***

One of the places that I recently discovered myself was Hanuwantiya. A sprawling lake of 950sq km, the biggest in Asia, spread in front of me. ***The view from my luxury campsite from the edge of the lake was nothing less than otherworldly.*** Avian life and water sports on the lake are the highlights that I feel your clients will love. I tried para

motoring and jet skiing (there were atleast ten other activities that kept our group busy) on the calm waters and highly recommend them for adventure lovers. More so, Hanuwantiya is still an absolutely raw spot with facilities being ramped up for travellers. It has 140 deluxe tents with attached bathrooms and hot & cold water. Of these 8 cottages overlook the large lake – the view is nothing less than ethereal. This is also pegged as the next big water sports destination in the state. The experience of the destination was enhanced by the Jal Mahotsav (Water Festival). Apart from the water sports, the festival was a perfect showcase of the cultural and traditional highlights of the state. A craft bazaar (market), yoga, hikes and bird watching were other activities that amped up the stay. ***What impressed me were the well-organised activities that were held only under the supervision of experts. From detailed safety procedures, to knowledgeable guides and birding experts, the whole experience was smooth and hassle free.***

We, at Indo Asia are mindful of the fact that only the best experiences are incorporated in your itinerary. For this, a detailed recce and a strong association with the authorities is our focus. In the coming months, we will be offering you fresh ideas from the region to add a dash of adventure and colour to the itineraries.

Sudesh Behal

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH!



Arjun Sahni | Senior Executive - Presales

Arjun's love for his 4-month daughter takes precedence over everything else. But before her, it was all about singing, music and table tennis. Something that makes Arjun such a wholesome asset for us.