

PRAVEG'S

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A Trusted Friend for Travellers

EMBARK ON A LUXURIOUS ODYSSEY

Unveiling India's Opulent Rail Journeys



Hobbit
Houses in India

India on Wheels

Railways are the backbone of Tourism in India. Every year, millions of tourists prefer trains to travel across the length and breadth of this culturally diverse country. A nicely compartmentalized train is India on wheels, showcasing different classes of passengers. While popular categories - first class, second class, and third class - are an oft-talked phenomenon, luxury trains are a rarity discussed among social gatherings. The current issue of Tourism One deals with luxury trains at length, covering travel-worthy destinations. Have you ever travelled on any of the luxury trains? How was your experience? Remember to share your train story with us.

ROYAL ORIENT LUXURY TRAIN needs your special attention in the list of luxury trains. Why? The train passes by Junagadh and Veraval - two unique destinations near Diu. This union territory boasts a beach resort that offers a hobbit house living experience. A new wave of hospitality offers hobbit house stays to Indian tourists. It's a favourite among young travellers and those who are looking for experiential hospitality. The magazine covers seven destinations, allowing you to enjoy living in hobbit-inspired cottages.

Finally, take advantage of the second instalment of our article on Kutch - Potpourri of Colourful Culture, Thrilling Adventure and Vibrant Life.

Read on!



CONTENTS

Incredible India

- 06 EMBARK ON A LUXURIOUS ODYSSEY
- 28 HOBBIT HOUSES IN INDIA
- 44 KUTCH: A POTPOURRI OF COLOURFUL CULTURE, THRILLING ADVENTURE AND VIBRANT LIFE
- 62 TOURISM TIDINGS



Praveg Communications (India) Limited
214 Athena Avenue, Sarkhej - Gandhinagar Highway,
Behind Jaguar Showroom, Gota, Ahmedabad 382481
Contact No.: 97129 84895
e: tourismone@praveg.com
www.praveg.com

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Editor: PARASKUMAR M. PATEL

Editorial Team
Dharmesh Ganatra

Design Team
Mahesh Patel
Yagnesh Bhavsar
Rakesh Bhavsar

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EMBARK ON A LUXURIOUS ODYSSEY

Unveiling India's Opulent Rail Journeys

By DUSHYANTH GOSWAMY, Staff Writer

Now, picture this. You're standing on a railway platform that's draped in the rosy glow of a chilly winter morning. The crisp air brings you the stimulating aroma of chai spices brewing. Somewhere in the distance, you hear a train whistle cutting through the countryside's morning reverberations, making you wonder what adventure lies ahead. Suddenly plumes of smoke appear and this beautiful train glides in. It's no regular passenger train, that's for sure! The fancy gold-trimmed carriages and lavish interiors with silk curtains give away that it's a luxury train. The crystal glasses clinking - now we're talking fancy schmancy.

In this odyssey, history, culture and nature come alive in old-world elegance. As butlers cater to your every whim while the ever-changing landscape outside unveils one breathtaking vista after another, will you surrender to the romance of travel that made royalty fall in love with Railways? Will you return home with memories worth more than any souvenir?

All aboard - a royal adventure awaits!

Five Jewels of Indian Luxury Trains

Maharajas' Express

This is the undisputed emperor of luxury locomotion, a masterpiece on rails crafted to perfection offering world-class indulgences fit for royalty.

- **Five Star Splendour:** Meticulously curated routes spanning North and Central India, showcasing gems like Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Varanasi, and Khajuraho.
- **Award-Winning Opulence:** Multiple awards for impeccable service and world-class hospitality.



Palace on Wheels

You can channel the spirit of past rulers on this royal salute to the heritage of Rajasthan. Seven dreamy nights whisk by amidst majestic forts, and tiger-stalked jungles, ending at the Taj's eternal romance frozen in marble.

- Royal Legacy: Nostalgic journey through royal Rajasthan.
- Heritage on Rails: A seven-night, eight-day adventure from Delhi, visiting the majestic palaces of Jaipur, leading to the iconic Taj Mahal in Agra through Ranthambore National Park.
- Timeless Elegance: Plush interiors reminiscent of carriages used by erstwhile Indian rulers.



Deccan Odyssey

- All aboard this whistling temptation unveiling South India's soul-bewitching landscapes, precious slivers of history and diverse cultures magically entwine into an unforgettable odyssey.
- Southern Sojourn: Unveiling the captivating tapestry of South India.
 - Six Diverse Itineraries: Unique blend of historical, cultural, natural, and spiritual treasures.
 - Five-Star Ambiance: Unparalleled comfort and luxury, akin to a five-star hotel on wheels.



Golden Chariot

As this celebrated train navigates Karnataka and Tamil Nadu's treasured realms, you will be filled with admiration for all the royal relics swathed in ancient mystique, you will lose yourself in ancient spiritual wisdom, and return transformed.

- Karnataka's Crown: Discover hidden gems of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- World-Acclaimed: Honoured as Asia's Leading Luxury Train in 2013.
- Two Captivating Routes: Choose between exploring the cultural kaleidoscope of Karnataka or venturing into the spiritual heartland of Tamil Nadu.



Royal Orient Train

On this voyage, you will experience tradition and royalty intertwined through Gujarat and Rajasthan's folkloric expanse. Temples, wildlife and vibrant bazaars float by your window while you luxuriate in old-world elegance, relishing spices that awakened kingdoms.

- Gujarat & Rajasthan Enchantment: Captivating journey through vibrant lands of Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- Palatial Decor: Step into a world of opulent comfort.
- Exotic Escapes: Immerse in the rich tapestry of cultures, diverse landscapes, and captivating wildlife sanctuaries.





EMBARK ON A LUXURIOUS ODYSSEY

Source: <https://www.mysindiaheritage.com/fairy-queen.html>



A Worthy Nominee

Has the magical pull of locomotion cast its allure yet? As the whistle beckons once more for the next leg of our journey into the heart of Incredible India cast your eyes beyond luxury travel's blinding big five. What other delightful secrets do these rails unravel across ever-changing tableaus seen through curtained windows?

Another plume of smoke on the horizon brings the Fairy Queen Express into view, its vintage carriages a portal into the Victorian era. Powered by the oldest working steam engine since 1855, doesn't stepping aboard feel like time travel into historical by-lanes?

Further along, the Heritage on Wheels invites you to lose yourself in Rajasthan's folklore and legends. As colourful turbaned locals recount stories of wars fought over honour and lost love, it's easy to imagine being part of these tales. Use your imagination - doesn't that rugged 16th-century fortress conjure visions of you as a princess, the sands of time carrying whispers of adventure?

India's vast fabric holds endless threads for you to tug at, unravelling secrets that rewrite her story across eras. Where will the rails carry you next on this moveable feast for the senses? The whistle blows again, promising undiscovered gems at every station if you just say, All Aboard!



Planning Your Luxurious Voyage

Where to next on this moveable feast filled with decadent dreams? As your imagination races, practical tugs weigh on prudent minds. How do you embark on the luxury rail sail of your dreams that sets your wanderlust spirit soaring?

But dreams transform best when anchored in thoughtful planning guided by able hands. What speaks to your wanderlust heart? Cultural discoveries, glimpses of exotic wildlife, or tribute to spiritual traditions? Channel the contours of your fantasy. North or South? Desert ruins or jungles echoing roar? Spirituality or exotic discoveries? Dictate directions lest fanciful dreams steer wayward!

Set budgets to match appetites - from 16,000 a night for those testing these waters to 5 lakhs for full immersion into luxury's embrace. Each train trails diverse destinations, durations and amenities. Choose based on what best awakens your exploratory soul!

Royal Railway Chronicles: A Concluding Note

As the train whistles a tune signalling the last leg of our journey through these rail-bound chronicles, consider this charming caveat from the luxury locomotive library.

Each of these luxury trains offers unique experiences, routes, amenities, and price points. Consider your interests, budget, and desired travel duration when choosing your perfect train and embrace the unparalleled comfort, impeccable service, and unforgettable experiences that await you on India's luxury trains.

In curating this exploration, certain notable trains may not have been explicitly featured, not due to oversight, but as a deliberate choice. Each train selected represents the epitome of opulence, historical significance, and cultural immersion. The exclusions shouldn't diminish the value of other luxury trains like the Desert Queen, Ramayana Express, and Vande Bharat Express, which undoubtedly offer unique experiences and cater to diverse preferences. The focus here is to provide a comprehensive yet curated glimpse into the unparalleled luxury and diverse offerings of India's most iconic trains, ensuring that readers are guided towards the epitome of opulent rail journeys.

Let knowledgeable advisors walk you through train differences to unveil one matching the contours of your fantasy. Then watch imagined landscapes outside moving windows transform into real, timeless memories within. Let luxury rail journeys in 'Incredible India' become tales you'll proudly recount for decades!

ALL ABOARD!

Beyond the Big Five

Desert Queen

- This train offers a unique desert safari experience.
- It provides a visual delight of the golden hues of the desert sand and camels grazing in the distance.
- The view of the golden sand enveloped by the warm red glow of the sun rising or setting is a sight to behold.

Vande Bharat Express

- This is a medium-distance train service operated by Indian Railways.
- The train can achieve semi-high speeds, but due to speed restrictions, multiple stoppages and traffic congestion, the maximum permissible speed of the services is limited to 160 km/h on a section of the Delhi-Bhopal service, and 110–130 km/h on other services.
- The train has an intelligent braking system which enables better acceleration and deceleration.
- All coaches are equipped with automatic doors; GPS-based audio-visual passenger information system, on-board hotspot Wi-Fi for entertainment purposes, and very comfortable seating. The executive class also has rotating chairs.
- The train's exterior appearance consists of an aerodynamic design. It has an advanced state-of-the-art safety feature, Kavach technology. Kavach technology is an indigenously developed system that helps avoid train collisions.



Ramayana Express

- This train is all set to promote religious tourism by covering all the major attractions related to Lord Rama.
- The train departs from Safdarjung Station in Delhi and covers all the destinations associated with Lord Rama and Ramayana in 17 days.
- There are adequate security arrangements on the train, along with a tour manager & guide who provide information to the passengers onboard.
- The train is run and managed by IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation), a subsidiary of the Indian Railways.
- The train has 10 coaches with five sleeper class non-aerated coaches and five AC 3-tier coaches.

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Hobbit Houses in India

A Comfortable & Cozy Accommodation

By JAYESH PUROHIT, Staff Writer

From the fictional race of people in JRR Tolkien's novels to the creation of underground houses, Hobbits have travelled a long journey across the globe. India, the rising tourism hub, has quickly adopted this new accommodation style for tourists. Hospitality brands offer hobbit house stay to their customers, for whom it is a lifetime experience.

This article lists seven hobbit homes in India where you can stay. If you haven't made any plans for your summer vacation, check this list and fulfil your 'Lord of the Rings' fantasy. This unique living space offers you a private abode where you can hide yourself from the snooping eyes of the world.

The term "Hobbit House" is often associated with the fictional world created by J.R.R. Tolkien in "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" series. In these stories, hobbits are a race of small, human-like beings who live in cosy, earth-covered homes in the Shire.

However, in the real world, a "Hobbit House" can refer to a type of home or structure inspired by Tolkien's works. These houses typically feature rounded shapes, and earthy materials, and sometimes incorporate energy-efficient and eco-friendly designs. Some people have taken inspiration from Tolkien's description of hobbit holes to create unique and charming homes or accommodations with a whimsical and cosy feel.

If you're interested in literature and fantasy, exploring the concept of real-life Hobbit Houses might be an intriguing avenue, blending your interests in architecture and fiction.



Asakho Chase, a fitness trainer from Nagaland, is the first Indian who built a hobbit home for himself in the forest. The 29-year-old built this comfortable house in the middle of the forest near Khonoma, Asia's first green village. The house and its builder went viral on social media in 2021; later on, hospitality players were inspired to create such hobbit homes for their guests.

Hobbit House

by SILVER OAKS

Idukki, Kerala

Embraced by the lush greenery of Kerala's greenest district, Idukki, The Hobbit House by Silver Oaks is a charming retreat perfect for honeymooners or those seeking solitude. Surrounded by nature, this cosy getaway invites you to connect with your inner hobbit, providing an ideal space for me-time and self-care.



Hobbit House

by MONTAGNA

Coorg, Karnataka

Discover tranquillity at Hobbit House by Montagna, a quaint escape offering unique cave-like features and a grass roof that seamlessly blends into its natural surroundings. This little hobbit haven is equipped with modern furniture and amenities, ensuring a comfortable stay amidst the beauty of nature.



AsanjA Italy

by SAFFRONSTAYS

Murbad, Maharashtra

Experience India's first earth-sheltered home at AsanjA by SaffronStays. Situated entirely underground and inspired by the hobbit homes in New Zealand, this cottage-core getaway features 5 rooms with cave-like aesthetics complemented by luxurious furniture and modern amenities—a true home for the hobbits!



Caves Resort

at HEAVOT CAVES

Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

In the heart of Shimla, known as heaven on earth, discover Heavot Caves Resort—a beautifully crafted retreat with a hobbit home structure. Offering a 360-degree view of the majestic Himalayas, this resort combines scenic beauty with the charm of hobbit-inspired architecture, creating an unforgettable escape.



Hobbit House

at WILDVIBES

Ooty, Tamil Nadu &
Wayanad, Kerala

Immerse yourself in the lush greenery and adventure of Kerala's Wayanad at WildVibes Hobbit House. Opening to a forest, this unique hobbit house offers not only a distinctive stay but also adventurous activities like stream hiking and sunrise treks. Wind down your day with a campfire under the stars—an enchanting experience in the heart of nature.



Beach Resort

by PRAVEG

Diu, U.T. India

Discover the epitome of tropical luxury at Praveg Beach Resort, nestled along the pristine Ghoghla Beach in Diu. The resort boasts 35 exquisitely crafted wooden hobbit-inspired cottages, each a masterpiece in design, promising a unique and unparalleled vacation experience. Picture yourself in our uniquely designed cottages, featuring sliding glass walls that open to the beachside, providing you with breathtaking panoramic views of the ocean. The resort offers not only a feast for the eyes but also a delightful pure veg dining experience. Dive into relaxation at a swimming pool, indulge your taste buds at a multicuisine restaurant, or unwind at our spa. For those seeking an extra touch of luxury, our rooftop cafe cum bar offers a perfect vantage point overlooking the sea. Praveg Beach Resort promises more than just a getaway; it's an invitation to a unique stay experience, where hobbit-inspired cottages harmonise with the beauty of the sea, creating memories that last a lifetime. 



A HOBBIT HOUSE STAY OVERLOOKING SEA

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Kutch

A Potpourri of Colourful Culture

Thrilling Adventure and Vibrant Life

(Part 2) By JAYESH PUROHIT, Staff Writer

White Rann

Kutch gives a jubilant welcome to its visitors and guests with a potpourri of colourful culture, thrilling adventure,

and vibrant life. It's travellers' season to visit Kutch, the second-largest district in India. In the last two decades, the tourism policy of Gujarat has been revamped to invite national and international guests to go gallivanting the hot terrains. Kutch has destinations and opportunities to satiate wanderlust & winter is the perfect season to explore it.

Kutch, in Sanskrit, means tortoise; if you ask why, look at the map of Kutch upside down, its shape looks like a tortoise hence the name 'Kutch'. The city has vibrant life, pristine locations, religious shrines and adventure spots. It's a perfect place for globetrotters to celebrate extraordinary life for a week or more.

The area of Kutch District is larger than the entire area of states like Haryana and Kerala. Kutch means something which intermittently becomes wet and dry; a large part of this district is known as Rann of Kutch, which is a shallow wetland that submerges in water during the rainy season and becomes dry during other seasons. The Rann is known for its marshy salt flats which become snow-white after the water dries up each season before the monsoon rains.

Dholavira

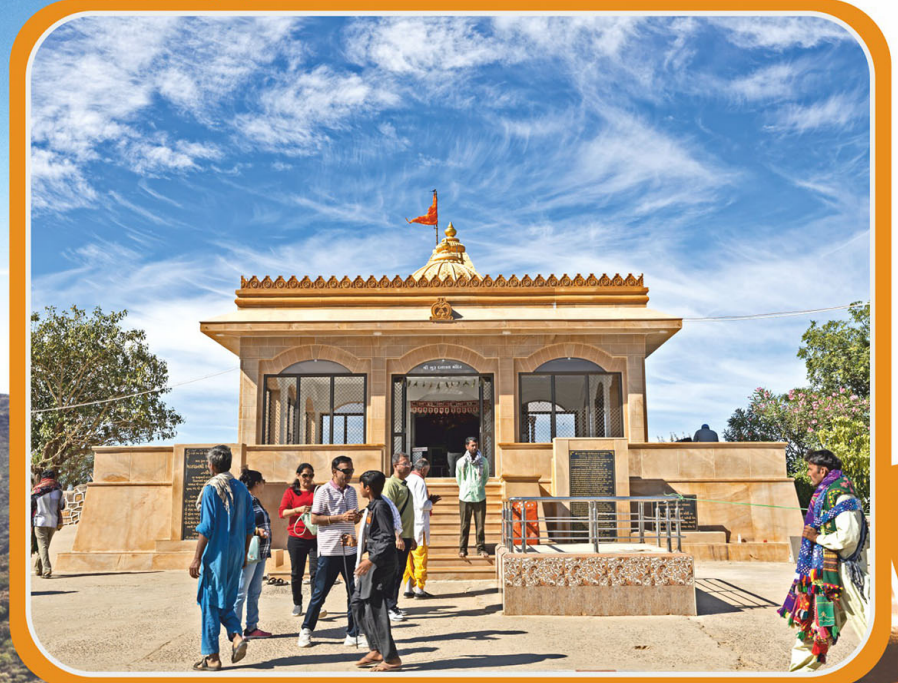
Kutch is historically connected with the ancient Indus Valley civilization. Dholavira, an archaeological site at Khadirbet in Bhachau taluka of Kutch, is one of the four major sites of Indus Valley civilization; the other three are Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, and Rakhigarhi. Located on the Tropic of Cancer, Dholavira contains ruins of the Indus Valley civilization. In 2021, UNESCO declared Dholavira as one of the world heritage sites.



Black Hills (Kalo Dungar)

Black Hill (Kalo Dungar in Gujarati) is the highest point in Kutch, at 458 meters. At the top of this hill, you can feast your eyes on a magnificent view down to a sprawling White Rann. Located on the hills is a 400-year-old temple dedicated to Lord Dattatreya. According to legends, Lord Dattatreya offered his body to starving jackals to eat. His body would regenerate itself continually even if jackals finish it to the last bone. For the last four centuries, priests at the temple have prepared cooked rice for jackals, who come in the late evenings for a meal.

Another interesting thing about Black Hill is the optical illusion caused by the anti-gravity slope; here, vehicles seem to defy gravity and roll up the slope. A team of experts from Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA), Institute of Seismological Research (Gandhinagar), and Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur) conducted a research and confirmed that the vehicles gain speed because the slope is steeper than it appears to the visitors.



RANN USTAV - RANN OF KUTCH
KALA DUNGAR - HIGHEST POINT IN KUTCH



Gandhi nu Gaam (Village of Gandhi)

Gandhi nu Gaam (Ludiya) showcases the real spirit of Kutch and its locals, who hold a 'never-give-up' attitude in the face of any calamity – natural or man-made. After the massive earthquake in 2001, the district was almost demolished – physically. Hundreds of people were killed in this devastating quake and thousands were left stranded and homeless. But people here are so strong-willed that they decided to resurrect like phoenix. With the help of state and central government, and other non-profit organizations, Kutch began to gain its former glory.

Gandhi nu Gaam is a hidden treasure of Kutch; this village was redeveloped from scratch by villagers in association with Manav Sadhna, Gandhi Ashram (Ahmedabad) and Vastu Shilpa Foundation. The combined efforts of villagers and NGOs resulted in 455 residential units, schools, health care centres, and other public and community utility structures.

Achar Maya, a leader of the weaver community in the village, spoke to Praveg's team and shared interesting information about the village and his craft. This village is also known for its handicraft, which is the main earning source of people. The women-folk are engaged in embroidery that creates vividly colourful designs that are rooted in the traditional arts of the region. Men are mostly busy doing wood carvings to create legs of cots, tables, and other furniture; moreover, they also embellish doors and windows of huts (Bhoonga) with natural colours.

For lovers of ethnic and traditional wares, Ludiya is a haven for shopping. Visitors can buy colourful quilts with kaleidoscopic designs, pillow covers, bags and purses, ethnic jewellery, skirts with mirror-work, Ghaghra and Cholis.

Gandhi Nu Gam is about 27 kilometres from White Rann Resort, Dhordo



गांधी का गाँव
सहयोग - मानव साधना, गांधी आश्रम,
अहमदाबाद - २७
माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री अटलबिहारी वाजपेयीजी
के कर कर्मलों द्वारा उद्घाटन
दिनांक ४-६-२००१ को सम्पन्न हुआ।

Colourful Culture & People

Kutch is inhabited by several groups and communities, who keep this desert colourful with their vibrant culture. Nomadic, semi-nomadic and artisan groups living here constitute a comparatively large group. Rabari and Ahir communities are fairly large groups in the district.



Food

Most of the population of the Kutch is Hindu or Jain, and therefore, the food of the region is largely vegetarian. Jains also avoid eating root vegetables such as potatoes, garlic, onions, and yams. The district also features a sizeable population of Muslims, who eat vegetables, chicken, mutton and occasionally camel meat.

In the villages of the district, staple foods include kadi-khichdi, milk, and bajra (pearl millet). The latter of these was introduced to the region by a king named Lakho Fulani, who was himself introduced to the grain during his period of exile. Bajara na rotla with curd and buttermilk is also a staple among the Gujarati people.

In the region, milk is considered to be a sacred food; an offering of milk is considered a gesture of friendship and welcoming, and dispute settlements invariably involve the parties offering milk to each other. Tea is the most popular drink in this region.



Music

Like other parts of Gujarat, people in Kutch love to play music and sing folk songs while following their daily routines. Apart from entertaining themselves, local artists also perform at public gatherings, like Rann Utsav and other cultural programs arranged by private resorts and hotels.

Stringed and wind instruments are popular in this region as people here like to play Santar (a sitar-like musical instrument) and flute occasionally, accompanied by other instruments.

Music forms a robust bedrock of the culture of Kutch; through folk songs, artists recount the inherent values of this region. Another significant use of music is to invite guests to explore Kutch. During our visit to Kalo Dungar (Black Hill), we saw an old man singing a song on Santar. Having asked about the lyrics of his song, he said he was inviting people to visit this land.

Kutchi music can be categorized into three geographies: north, south and east. Sindhi music is popular in the northern parts of Kutch, while Kanthi music is popular in the south and Vagad is popular in the east.



Textile Art

The textile art of Kutch is internationally renowned as people from different parts of the world buy embroidered blouses and skirts from local markets. This unique needlework mastered by Rabari women is dense with motifs and a variation with mirrors sewn into the embroidery. Apart from Rabari, communities involved in this art are Rohanas, Sodhas, Garacia Jats, and Dhanetah Jats.

Artisans also do wonders on leather by creating handmade items like shoes, chappals, purses and other beautiful fashion accessories for men and women.

Within the category of Kutch embroidery, there are several sub-categories as each tribe and sub-tribe produces a unique signature form of art.



Thrilling Adventure

For adventure seekers, private resorts and organizers offer several adventurous sports and rides like hot air balloon, parasailing, paramotoring and cycling. White Rann is the best place to enjoy thrilling activities with all the essential safety gear. 📸



TOURISM TIDINGS

Gujarat Tourism Paves the Way for India's Ascent in Adventure Tourism



Source: Imagine Rural / Shutterstock.com

Pre-Vibrant Gujarat Summit Convention Charts Path for India to Join Top 10 Adventure Tourism Destinations Globally

Adventure Tour Operators Association of India recently conducted its 15th annual convention at the Statue of Unity in Kevadiya. Running from December 16 to 18, the event, supported by the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat, strategically positions India to become one of the world's top 10 adventure tourism destinations.

Over 300 adventure tour operators, enthusiasts, travelers, and industry leaders from across the country converged during the three-day convention. In line with a commitment to sustainable tourism and carbon footprint reduction, a comprehensive carbon emissions calculation was initiated for the entire event, accompanied by key sustainable

initiatives.

To significantly reduce energy consumption, the conference was hosted in winter, resulting in a remarkable 68% reduction in energy usage, lessening the cooling load and diesel consumption. Delegates were also urged to minimize their carbon footprint, both in-room and throughout the event.

Recognizing the potential consumption of 4,700 water bottles daily, a Zero Plastic Waste policy was enacted, eliminating 15,000 plastic bottles. Participants were encouraged to use glass or reusable bottles, with water dispensers strategically placed throughout the venue.

In a bid to reduce paper usage, seed papers were introduced as sustainable alternatives for badges and luggage tags, with participants urged to plant their badges.

Robust Growth Expected in Religious Tourism, India

India's religious tourism sector is poised for substantial growth, projecting a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) exceeding 16% from 2023 to 2030. The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic has notably strengthened the religious inclination of Indians. Industry reports, highlighted by Sachin Alug, CEO of NLB Services, indicate a significant uptick in overnight pilgrimages and a 14%

increase in donations during the 2021-2022 period.

The inauguration of the Ram Mandir is anticipated to be a transformative force, with expectations of creating nearly 25,000 jobs in various sectors such as chefs, front desk managers, housekeeping staff, and tour guides, as emphasized by Alug.

Data from the Ministry of Tourism reveals that religious tourism attracted 1,439 million tourists in 2022, generating ₹ 1.34 lakh crore in revenue for religious destinations that year. Projections indicate that the sector is poised to reach a revenue of ₹ 59 billion by 2028, contributing to the creation of 140 million temporary and permanent jobs by 2030.

Vibrant Gujarat Aims to Attract Tourism Investments with Innovative Projects

To secure investments for tourism ventures reminiscent of global destinations like Mauritius and the Maldives, the Gujarat government showcases its plans at the Vibrant Gujarat summit held this month.

Identifying two dam sites—Kadana and Dharoi—and the historic island of Beyt Dwarka, believed to be Lord Krishna's abode during his reign in Dwarka, the government envisions constructing floating villas.

In a groundbreaking initiative for India, the government also proposes constructing glass viewing decks over the Kadana and Dharoi dams.

"These are potential projects for which we have conducted detailed studies. We have put these projects in the public domain to inform investors about the existing tourist potential in the state," stated Hareet Shukla, Principal Secretary, Tourism Department.



Gujarat's Ambitious Plans Include Floating Villas and Grand Canyon-Inspired Viewing Decks

"We expect to issue tenders for these projects by February 2024," he added. The government has earmarked Rs 200 crore for developing tourist facilities at Beyt Dwarka in Dev Bhumi Dwarka district, currently accessible only by ferry from Okha on the mainland. A 2.3-km Signature Bridge is under construction over the sea to connect Okha with Beyt Dwarka.

A tourist master plan has also been devised for areas around the Dharoi dam on the Sabarmati river and the Kadana dam on the Mahisagar river, renowned hotspots for birdwatchers.

The proposed glass viewing decks draw inspiration from the iconic structures at the Grand Canyon in the US.

Ayodhya's Ram Mandir to benefit temple tourism in India

India's temple tourism is poised for a substantial upswing following the inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya. Analysts anticipate an annual footfall of over 100 million at the Ram temple, surpassing the number of visitors to the Vatican City (9 million) and Mecca (20 million). The creation of Ayodhya as a new religious tourist center, coupled with enhanced connectivity and infrastructure, is expected to yield a considerable economic impact, as stated by analysts.

Currently contributing \$200 billion (7% of India's economy) in tourism revenue, India is set to further boost the sector through the government's support to pilgrimage sites.

The report draws parallels with



Varanasi's transformation after the inauguration of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor. Government data reveals that post-corridor inauguration, Varanasi witnessed a surge in tourists, with over

130 million visitors. In contrast, the pre-corridor annual footfall was a mere 7 million. Locals and hotels in Varanasi have experienced up to a 65% increase in income. ■



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