



## PRESS RELEASE



# THE 2K14 FORECAST TO WHAT'S HOT IN INDIA: SOUTHEAST ASIA EXPERTS AMPERSAND TRAVEL REVEAL WHY 2014 IS TO BE INDIA'S YEAR...

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With an incredible new ship setting sail on the Ganges, India's first truly mobile luxury camp extending their calendar for the year ahead and the debut of a foodie experience like no other, never has there been a more exciting time to visit India than in 2014. Always keeping a finger firmly on the pulse and often holding the golden ticket to some of India's finest experiences, leading tour operator Ampersand Travel reveals the ones to watch for 2014...

## THE HOT LIST

### ...FOR THE ULTIMATE FOODIE

#### THE ART OF LIVING TO EAT, A CULINARY TOUR FROM AHMEDABAD - AMRITSAR - CALCUTTA - HYDERABAD: 7 - 19 JANUARY 2014

Debuting in January, The Art of Living to Eat is a foodie tour like no other and a true feast for the mind with passionate Indian food historian, Jonty Rajagopalan. The 13- day culinary journey will see food lovers travel from the food of the streets to the kitchens of the Kings between the cities of Ahmedabad - Amritsar - Calcutta - Hyderabad, experiencing a way of life where every meal is a celebration of life itself. Jonty will reveal fresh insight into how food is so closely influenced by both the country's religion and culture and will also highlight how each region's character comes into its own in the kitchen. Highlights of the trip include a visit to the Golden Temple at Amritsar and being welcomed into local village homes for traditional feasts. The January 2014 tour is the first in a series running throughout



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the year.

The 13-day Art of Living to Eat tour is available from £5,860 per person, based on two sharing and including international flights, domestic flights in India, 13 nights accommodation, all meals, activities, entrances, road transport and tour leader plus a daily gift.

### ...FOR THE ADVENTUROUS

#### THE ULTIMATE TRAVELLING CAMP: THIKSEY - NAGALAND - KOHIMA: NOVEMBER 2013 - MARCH 2014

August 2013 saw the launch of The Ultimate Travelling Camp - a brand new travelling camp around India. As the first truly mobile luxury camps in India, the camps span over a calendar of destinations and festivals in India throughout late 2013 and into 2014 and encompass mountains, deserts, countryside, and jungles. Guests of the camp will get the chance to venture to unexplored and off-the-beaten-track places while staying in true Nomadic style with added luxury - each of the tents feature en suite bathrooms, private decks, and a private butler. Experiences can include catching glimpses of the elusive tiger in the golden hue of the evening sky in Dudhwa, meeting gurus from the far reaches of the Himalayas, rafting down the River Indus, watching a game of polo at 12,000 feet and dining on a deserted mountain pass. The first Camp to launch was The Chamba Camp in Thiskey, which is situated in the shadow of the Thiskey Monastery but further scheduled camps for the remainder of 2013/14 include the Nagaland Camp running 27 November - 5 December 2013 over the Hornbill Festival, Duhwa Camp from 15 November 2013 - 20 March 2014 and the Kohima Camp from 15 November - 30 March 2014.

Ampersand Travel offers a package from £3298.00 per person, based on two sharing and including return international economy flights from London - Delhi, return domestic flights between Delhi - Leh and airport transfers, 5 nights full board in a luxury tent at the Chamba Camp, 2 nights B&B at Trident Gurgaon, and 2 half day tours of Delhi.

### ...FOR SPA WORSHIPPERS

#### THE LAUNCH OF VANA RETREAT, MALSI ESTATE: JANUARY 2014

Launching January 2014, Vana Malsi Estate is already being tipped to become the best destination spa in India. Located in Dehradun, the 21-acre estate is set amidst Sal forest with peaceful views of the lower Himalayan foothills and will offer ayurveda and yoga in their purest form, along with holistic

oriental therapies, spa treatments, aqua therapies, fitness, meditation and nutrition, to create personalised retreats that ensure results. In addition to the 90 contemporary designed guestrooms, suites and villas, there will be two restaurants, both with unique concepts of reflecting wellness and ayurvedic principles.

Ampersand Travel offers a 7 night package from £3,100 per person including full board accommodation in a Garden Room, return domestic flights from Delhi, use of all resort facilities, specialist consultations and spa treatment of choice.

## ...FOR THOSE WITH A LOVE OF THE WATER

### THE LAUNCH OF ABN RAJMAHAL GANGES: FEBRUARY 2014

Launching on the waters of the Ganges in mid-February 2014, this brand new, specially-designed ship will offer a schedule of weekly 7-night Ganges cruises from Patna right up to the city of Varanasi. Operating only in periods of high water, when India is at its most lush and attractive, the boat will explore untouched villages and towns of rural India with sightseeing excursions to some of the regions most important historical and religious sites, including two days of sightseeing in Varanasi itself. The ship itself will boast 22 spacious cabins: 14 doubles on the upper deck, 4 doubles on the main deck and 4 singles, all of which will have full length French balconies. The dining room features a saloon with bar, while other facilities include a small Mimasa spa, library and vast sun deck with demountable canopy – this feature, together with a draught of only 1 metre, allows the ship to reach as far upstream as Varanasi at certain times of the year.

Ampersand Travel offers a package from £2555 per person, including a 7 night cruise, 1 night in Patna, 1 in Varanasi and international flights.

### INTRODUCING SUKOON – A NEW ECO LUXURY HOUSEBOAT IN SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

The summer capital of Kashmir, standing on the picturesque Dal Lake and Jhelum River, Srinagar is an alpine paradise of high Himalayan mountains, snow clad high altitude lakes, streams, rivers and spectacular landscapes. The lakes and waterways in and around Srinagar are serene in beauty and a trip to Kashmir is not complete without a stay on a houseboat – a throwback from the Raj when the British were not allowed to build their homes on land. The latest and arguably Kashmir's most stylish houseboat is the Sukoon. Moored on the Dal Lake in the heart of the verdant Kashmir Valley, Sukoon – a Sufi term for an elevated state of mind combining peace, wisdom and contentment – has five en-suite bedrooms each named after the

famous Mughal Gardens. There is a communal sitting and dining room to relax in by day while nights can be spent dining under the endless canopy of stars, lulled by the gently lapping water. Other activities available in the vicinity include mountaineering, trekking, water trekking, snow skiing, heli-skiing, rafting, water skiing, trout fishing and river rafting.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night package from £1,170 per person including international and domestic flights plus return transfers from Srinagar Airport.

### ...FOR WILDLIFE LOVERS

## SUJAN EXPANDS PORTFOLIO WITH THE LAUNCH OF JAWAI LEOPARD CAMP, RAJASTHAN

This December sees the launch of the JAWAI Leopard Camp – the latest addition to the SUJAN portfolio, located in the heart of Rajasthan's untrammelled wilderness between the former kingdoms of Jodhpur and Udaipur. The Camp will comprise eight luxurious tented suites and is the only property to lie within this unexplored region of outstanding natural beauty. The landscape hosts a diverse eco-system, at the top of which sits the leopard. While sightings are not easy throughout its global range and in India, at JAWAI the probability of seeing the felines is close to 75%.

### ...FOR TEA AFICIONADOS

## NEW TEA TOURS AT THE TALAYAR VALLEY BUNGALOW, MUNNAR

Located 20km from the town of Munnar, The Talayar Valley Bungalow is a stunning four suite original bungalow built for a British plantation manager and exudes colonial character throughout. Brand new for 2014, Talayar will offer tea excursions to guests, enabling them to get to grips with how tea is produced - from learning to pluck tea from the field to operating the machinery in the tea factories.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night package from £1,350 per person including international flights and return transfers from Kochi Airport.

### ...FOR A SEAT WITH A VIEW

## NEW 10-SEATER KERALA SEA PLANE SERVICE:

Cochin Airport – Cochin City – Kumarakom – Alleppey – Kollam – Bekal

June 2013 saw the first seaplane service in Kerala launch, allowing tourists to travel the abundant water bodies across the

state while enjoying the amazing views of Kerala's luscious scenery. The new services now allows tourists to travel from Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode and Mangalore to several points in the backwaters like Alleppey, Kollam, Allapuzha, Kasargode and Ernakulam.

## ALSO FOR THE RADAR, SOME AMPERSAND FAVOURITES FOR 2014

### ...HOT HYDERABAD HOTELS

Located deep in the southern part of central India, Hyderabad is a tale of two cities – the ancient and the modern.

Banjara Hills meanwhile is one of Hyderabad's swanky new suburbs and the lavish Park Hyatt Hyderabad marked the first urban Park Hyatt in India when it launched in the area in March 2012. The hotel's chandeliers take inspiration from the surrounding area in which some of the world's biggest diamonds including the Koh-i- Noor were mined. In addition to its 209 rooms and suites and 42 serviced apartments, there is an impressive spa and four restaurants. A mecca for Hyderabad's high society figures, the hotel also boasts the best brunch in town at weekends.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay at Taj Falaknuma Palace in a Palace Room from £2,280 per person including international flights and return airport transfers.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay at The Park in a Luxury Room from £1,290 per person including international flights and return airport transfers.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay at Park Hyatt Hyderabad in a View King Room from £1,490 per person including international flights and return airport transfers.

### ...NEXT BIG DESTINATION IN KERALA

BEKAL - Located approx. 16km south on the national highway in the northern most district of Kerala, Bekal is a new destination on the tourist map. Known as Kasaragod, it is renowned as the land of Gods, forts, rivers, hills and beautiful beaches – the Bekal Fort is one of the largest and best preserved forts in Kerala. Vivanta by Taj Bekal is the newest property to launch in the area with 71 stylish villas and rooms, with Kettuvallam house boat motifs woven in Balinese design.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay at Taj Bekal in a Deluxe Delight with Courtyard room from £1,550 per person including international and domestic flights plus return transfers from Mangalore Airport.



## ...JUST FOR THE LOVE OF IT

### RAJAKKAD ESTATE, DINDIGUL, TAMIL NADU

Unveiled Autumn 2012, Rajakkad Estate is an intimate garden hotel with 7 unique bedrooms set within an 18th century wooden structure built in Keralan style with thousands of interlocking beams, panels and screens. The Rajakkad mansion is elevated 1000m above sea level deep within the Palani Hills in Tamil Nadu and exudes a traditional yet refined style with colourful interiors. Rajakkad's 45 acre estate is bursting with agricultural life.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay in a Deluxe Room from £1,310 per person including international and domestic flights plus return transfers from Madurai Airport.

### PALAIS DE MAHÉ, PONDICHERRY

Located in the French Quarter of the gracious town of Pondicherry, famed by Life of Pi, the Palais de Mahé is the latest property from Indian hotel group, CGH Earth. Launched just last December, this elegant three-storey mansion with walkways, porticos and a pièce de résistance swimming pool, is by far the best accommodation in Pondicherry. The hotel offers 18 spacious rooms and features unique architecture in French colonial style.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay from £1,140 including international flights and return transfers from Chennai Airport.

### LAKSHMAN SAGAR, RAJASTHAN

Launched July 2012 and founded by Singh Kochhar, Lashman Sagar is the third property to have launched under new hospitality brand Sewara. It is a boho chic property located a 2 and 1/2 hours drive from Jodhpur. Built in the late 19th century as a hunting lodge by the then Thakur of Raipur, accommodation now comprises of a dozen secluded mud-an-stone cottages each with their own plunge pool. Guests can enjoy copious activities including Nature Walks, Jeep Safaris and Horse Safaris through the 'Badlands of India' to a Fatehgarh dinner complete with Bullock Cart ride to the Raipur fort.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay from £1,370 per person including international and domestic flights plus return transfers from Jodhpur Airport.

### SATPURA TIGER RESERVE, MADHYA PRADESH

The Satpura Tiger Reserve is an amalgamation of the Satpura National Park, the Bori Wild Life Sanctuary and the Pachmarhi Sanctuary. This prime wildlife habitat is relatively unknown and is rightly believed to be one of India's best kept secrets. Here,

patrons can explore true wilderness without crowds but also enjoy a diverse and unique range of activities. Apart from Jeep, Elephant and Boat Safaris, Satpura is the only park of its kind in Central India that offers Walking Safaris, giving enthusiasts a 'one of a kind' opportunity to explore tiger country on foot. Visitors are likely to sight Leopards, Sloth Bear, Indian Wild Dogs, hordes of Indian Gaur, Sambhar plus other herbivores found in Central India.

Ampersand Travel offers a 5 night stay at the Reni Pani Lodge from £1,500 per person including international and domestic flights plus return transfers from Bhopal Airport.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

More information on Ampersand Travel

[www.ampersandtravel.com](http://www.ampersandtravel.com)

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