

### INDIA

#### MARCHING AHEAD

With over 15.6 million people vaccinated in India, the country is going strong in its fight against Covid-19. Life is steadily but cautiously getting back to its pre-pandemic rhythm with schools, colleges, workplaces, and entertainment and recreational centres opening up. Spring with its bevy of harvest festivals and celebrations has definitely put hope and cheer in the people's hearts.

There are also plenty of long weekends coming up in the months ahead that have had people planning excitedly. The mountains are spectacular at this time of the year with lush greenery and flowers blooming in every imaginable colour of the spectrum. The beaches with their balmy weather and laidback vibe are also a welcoming choice for those looking to thaw out after winter.

Hotels and resorts across the country are also opening up after refurbishments. The latest properties to open their gates for guests are Woshully Bungalow, Taneerhulla Cottage, and Surgi Bungalow in Coorg from amā Stays & Trails' repertoire. Set in the midst of a tranquil coffee plantation, these original planters' bungalows are the best way to experience the onset of breathtaking white coffee blossoms in March. It is also the perfect time to witness the harvesting of the aromatic Robusta and Arabica varieties of coffee. Your morning cup of Joe never looked better!

As a company, we too are doing our bit to revitalise inbound tourism in the coming months. We are currently participating in the Kerala Travel Mart virtually. We are connecting with partners from across the tourism spectrum to work out the best possible collaborations to revive tourism once international travel reopens. We will also be there at the ITB Berlin 2021 between 09-12 March 2021 to connect with partners globally and exchange specialist information and to understand upcoming travel trends.

#### STATE INITIATIVES

We are the sum of all our individual efforts, and each state is doing its own part to revive tourism as best as possible. While Uttar Pradesh government has announced the grant of INR 100 crore each for the development of tourism facilities in Varanasi and Ayodhya, the Rajasthan budget has allocated INR 500 crore in the Tourism Development Fund. The government will use the funds for a series of developmental infrastructure programs to increase tourist inflow to places like Ajmer, Jaipur, and Udaipur.

In Karnataka, the Chief Minister has laid the foundation stone for a new airport at Vijayapura (Bijapur) with a hope that once completed; it will boost tourism to the historical city and improve regional connectivity. The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation's "Ramayan Special" train has begun its maiden journey from Indore on 28 February 2021 with full occupancy. The route will cover destinations that are significant to the epic.

Himachal Pradesh has allowed river rafting and paragliding in additional sites to boost adventure tourism in the state. It is also looking to explore other adventure activities and promotion of unexplored areas. While these measures are important to revive tourism in the different states, the focus is largely on sustainable development.

#### SUSTAINABILITY FOR EVERYONE

The importance of sustainability in all aspects of our lives has never been more evident than today. As the world celebrated World Wildlife Day on 03 March 2021, its theme Forests and Livelihood: Sustaining People and Planet resonated in all aspects of tourism as well. With the social and economic effects of the pandemic still at large in communities with historic ties to forests and forest-adjacent areas, the need for sustainable resources and livelihoods is more evident than ever.

The need of the hour is to ensure that the symbiotic ecosystem that exists between forests, indigenous people, forest species, and the wildlife be protected at all costs. This is essential to preserve the ecological, economic, and cultural heritage of the people and the forests. These are not only treasure troves of biodiversity but they are also rich with stories, traditional practices, and knowledge that are crucial in understanding and creating a sustainable relationship in the future.

Government of India is taking all necessary steps to ensure that we are prepared well to face the challenges that we may face to tackle the economic and social fallouts from the pandemic. For detailed statistics and vaccination status, please [click here](#).