

TravelTrendz International

November / December 2022

a travel lifestyle publication

Azerbaijan

City Of Ganja

Ashar Valley

Desert Retreat

Malta

Winter Season

Namibia

Remarkable Contrasts



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Image : Namibia Tourism Board

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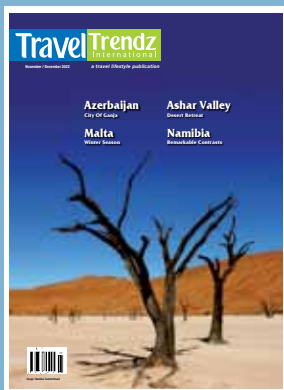
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The winter travel season is fast approaching and the Industry is really geared up. The pandemic restrictions are gone except in China. The entire industry is looking to find ways to offset the losses of the last 2 years. There are some issues ground handling in some major airports plus delayed visa issuance for some major destinations. On top of it political issues in Europe are not helping at all.

In this issue as always, we as always offer new and exciting options to our readers. The top destinations and Hotels are being introduced as never before. Do not miss the article on Namibia, Africa. Learn more about the amazing Azerbaijan. The article on Brasil is a must read. We have a very special article on AIUla helping you to learn about a place like no other. We have an informative piece about Malta.

We have covered the top notch hotels in this issue such as the beautiful Anantara properties in Salah and Jabal Akhdar in Oman. We have also featured the Cinnamon Hotels in the enchanting Sri Lanka

As always, read about the news and views relating to the hospitality industry plus learn about what is happening in the Airlines and Aviation Industry.

So, have a good time reading...

Ken Chapman
Editor

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FEBRUARY
2023

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Image: Shahdag, Azerbaijan

VIBRANT CITY OF GANJA

As the second biggest city in Azerbaijan and birthplace of legendary poet Nizami Gencevi - Ganja offers a diverse experience of culture, gastronomy and nature getaways.

There is a number of important historical and architecturally beautiful sightseeings to see in Ganja. As you walk across the city, you will notice a variety of architectural styles representing different historical periods. The ancient mosques and traditional hammams belong to the Safavid era, while there are also landmarks left from times of the Ganja Khanate and Russian Empire. Certainly, traditional Azerbaijani hammams are an essential in the wellbeing care routine of locals. To truly have the authentic experience, you can visit one of the oldest hammams – Chokak Hammam – dating back to 1606. After restoration in 2013 it functions as hammam and spa centre, taking care of your body and soul, as well as authentically pleasing with beautiful interiors.

Ganja is home to one of the essential spiritual centres of the 8th century - Imamzadeh mosque and mausoleum complex. The complex is located approximately 7 km north of Ganja and welcomes culture vultures from all over the world. The Imamzadeh Mausoleum (also known as the Goy dome, the Goy Mosque or the Goy Imam) was built in various stages beginning from the 14th century. Throughout the history, a number of mosques and caravanserais within the complex's fortress walls appeared and disappeared until the complete restoration of the complex in 2016. The mausoleum's exquisite blue-tiled dome, decorated with peacocks and floral patterns is especially mesmerising and mostly visited by the tourists.

After the exploration of many sightseeing, everyone can rest, take a stroll enjoying the greenness and refreshing air at the five-hectare oasis - Khan's Garden. Back in time it was a royal





garden of the same name and only started transforming to its current look as Governor's Garden in 1847. The garden has a diverse and unique flora, with plane and palm trees being the main centrepieces. To dive deeper and explore Azerbaijan's culture and social life, you can stop at one of the teahouses next to the garden.

Ganja has a special surprise with a variety of delicious national dishes for all the gourmands. Ganja's version of pakhlava is lighter in colour and baked on a copper tray over a campfire. It's extremely tender and has a taste exuding hints of roses and saffron that melt in your mouth. To try other exquisite culinary specialties one must try: Ganja dovga, a yoghurt-based soup with herbs and vegies; keta is a flat bread stuffed with herb and white cheese; and of course, shah (king) pilaf, a rice dish resembling a massive pie packed with meat, dried fruit and onions and baked with a covering of lavash flatbread.

Ganja is also a great choice for those who enjoy a getaway to nature as it is located close to the beautiful national park Goygol with its unique flora and fauna. The National Park was built for the protection of various beautiful lakes in the region, among



which Goygol is the biggest one. The beauty of lake Goygol serves as an inspiration for many artists who reflected their vision in a number of poems, songs, and paintings. The name of Lake Goygol translates from Azerbaijani as “Blue Lake” and perfectly symbolises the clearness of the water. Located at 1,500 above the sea, it offers stunning scenery, which makes it one of the favourite locations of Azerbaijanis and tourists alike. This beautiful lake lies in the Lower Caucasian Mountains and is 3-meters wide. For the experienced hikers, the trip to Mount Kapaz can be a bonus to your time at Lake Goygol.

Walled City Lahore



by: Fouzia Sohail

Always pertaining its splendour through the differentiated directives of norms over a few centuries, Lahore's luminous image is intact. It is not only a UNESCO 'City of Literature' but as of now a city of thriving universities, film industry, tourism, publishing industry, bustling bazaars and of Sufi and Qawwali (folk melodies) music and shrines. Lahore is not only historically rich but culturally so, being affiliated to various sects, religions and rulers as its past portrays.

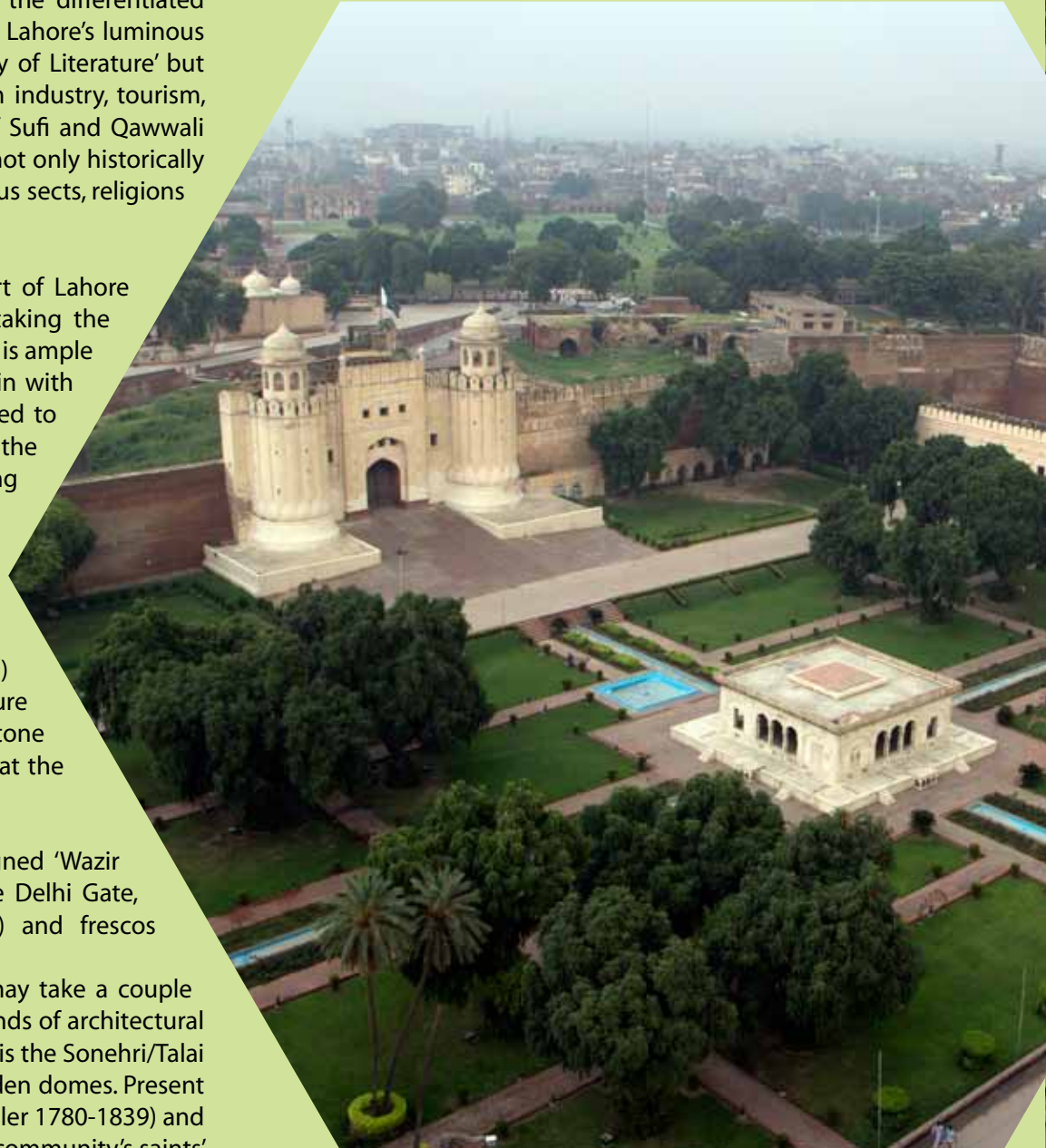
The Old City or The Walled City is the heart of Lahore and captures one's attention immediately taking the visitor to an era beyond the past. Whilst there is ample proof of the lavish heritage sites, I shall begin with the Lahore Fort or "Royal Fort" as it is referred to in the Urdu language. Its sits elegantly at the northern end of the Walled City, encompassing a 20-hectare area with 21 monuments which are truly a visual delight. The main entrance is the majestic Alamgiri Gate with its white coloured stones and towards its west side is the "Badshahi Masjid" (Imperial Mosque), while the "Hazuri Bagh" (Quadrangle Garden) is right across it. The iconic Mughal architecture is dominant through the carved red sandstone and marble inlay work as is the mirror work at the Sheesh Mahal or Shah Burj.

Further on, one meets the intricately designed 'Wazir Khan Masjid' which stands grandly near the Delhi Gate, here the ostentatious "Kashi-Kari"(tilework) and frescos (mural artwork) are so evident.

The continued restoration within this site may take a couple of years more and is an ode to the masterminds of architectural designers of Lahore's past. Within the vicinity is the Sonehri/Talai Masjid (Golden Mosque) apparent by its golden domes. Present nearby is the Samadhi of Ranjit Singh (Sikh ruler 1780-1839) and the Gurdwara Dera Sahib which are the Sikh community's saints' remains demonstrating the connection of the Sikh community to Lahore.

Apart from the many 'Havelis' (ancestral mansions) that give insight of the lush lifestyles and ornate décor, the true essence of this legendary city is felt visually and through the olfactory senses as one passes through the narrow alleys consisting of bazaars, baithaks (sitting or meeting areas), hammams (bath areas with an elaborate canal system), food street, and the amazing craft shops, that are a treat to any visitor. Your trip can be double the fun by hopping on a Rangeela Rikshaw (colourful form of local tuk-tuk).

The legacy of this wondrous walled city is felt with the engraved handworks on the doors and iron latches at each house. A special mention to 'Haveli Mian Sultan' (House of Mian Sultan- a



heritage property #G-287) and also a definite mention to the tomb (Mazaar-e-Iqbal) of Allama Mohammed Iqbal - poet, philosopher and politician who first idealised the concept of Pakistan. The tomb of this 'Poet of the East' is a mausoleum located in the front of the Badshahi Masjid's forecourt (Imperial Mosque) and pays true tributes to the national poet of Pakistan. This tomb, built in a mixture of architectural styles is consciously lower than the mosque's level in respect to the place of worship and has the poet's couplet inscribed to state his anti-discriminatory views and thus voices the spirit of equality and brotherhood to resonate in this city of wonders.



OCEANIC

KHORFAKKAN RESORT AND SPA



An idyllic escape set on acres of UAE's picturesque East Coast tucked away in the coastal town of Khorfakkan. With a secluded beach, warm sand, gleaming waters and lush greenery set in the spectacular rolling hills of the Hajjar Mountains.

Imagine soaking up the sun at the luxury Oceanic Khorfakkan Resort & Spa, enjoying the private secluded beach, warm sand, gleaming waters and lush greenery in a setting of the spectacular rolling hills of the Hajjar Mountains.

This Arabian resort offers an idyllic escape set on acres of UAE's picturesque East Coast, tucked away in the coastal town of Khorfakkan. A mere 60 minutes' drive from Dubai and Sharjah international airports; only 20 minutes from the cities of Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah; and a few minutes away from vibrant downtown attractions. With 177 spacious guestrooms and lavish suites, 3 sea facing villas with 6 spacious bedrooms, exceptional dining establishments, outstanding recreational and leisure facilities, one of a kind dive sites and so much more, this luxury resort exemplifies a true escape.





MARBELLA RESORT OVERVIEW

Marbella Resort Sharjah is the ideal family getaway place offering a secluded and intimate ambience designed in the Arab Andalusia style of architecture, a concept unique in itself in the Arabian Peninsula.

The Resort comprises of 50 newly refurbished villas with its new modern look and unique combination of master and junior suites, offers an ample and luxurious accommodation for families of up to 6 people sharing 3 bedrooms.



Hotel Holiday International

The Hotel Holiday International | ****4 Star Hotel is located next to and looks directly across Sharjah's beautiful Khalid Lagoon and Al Majaz Water Front. Only 20 minutes' drive from both Dubai and Sharjah International airports and less than 5 minutes away from the nearby Sharjah Souk and shopping malls. The hotel's location also provides easy access to the Exhibition centre- Expo and the beautiful corniche.

The Hotel's sprawling complex features 249 luxurious rooms including newly refurbished suites with its new modern look and stunning views of Sharjah offering the ultimate in comfort with cozy balconies overlooking the picturesque Khalid Lagoon. The high quality furnishing and elegant décor will meet the comfort and requirements of business & leisure travelers alike.

Luxus Grand

Deluxe Rooms and Luxury suites unparalleled in the market

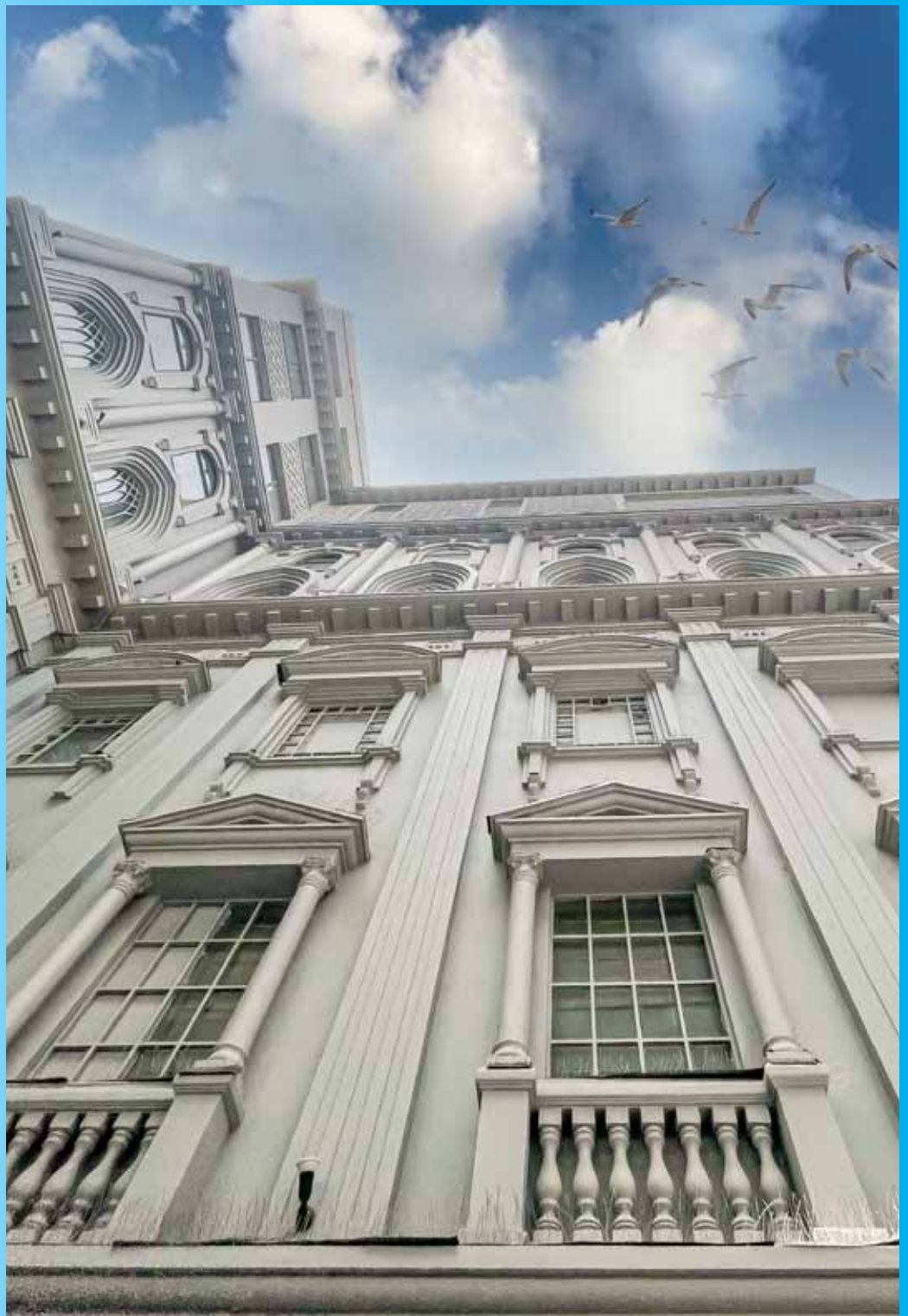
Grand by name & service, Luxus Grand Hotel provides Deluxe Rooms and Luxury suites unparalleled in the market. Opened in 2016, the property is one of the latest additions to the Lahore Skyline.

Business & leisure travelers alike appreciate the central location, right on the Mall Road, the heart of the city's business and food district.

Hotel Facilities:

- ⇒ 100 Luxury rooms
- ⇒ Banquet halls
- ⇒ 8 Board rooms
- ⇒ Indoor swimming pool
- ⇒ Game area
- ⇒ Fully equipped gym
- ⇒ Indoor mosque
- ⇒ High speed internet
- ⇒ Multi Cuisines Restaurant
- ⇒ Valet Parking
- ⇒ 24/7 Laundry Service
- ⇒ 24 hours room service
- ⇒ 24 hours maintenance available

Address: 4 Egerton Road Lahore, Pakistan
luxusgrandhotel.com



Majestic Suites & Villas



Luxus Hunza 5 star Luxury Resort in Pakistan with panoramic lake views

Luxus Hunza is an affiliate of Luxus Grand Hotel, Lahore. After successfully leading the Lahore hospitality industry in guest reviews and rating, Luxus is proud to present a one of its kind 5 star Luxury Resort in Pakistan with panoramic lake views.

Address: Luxus Hunza, Aainabad, 15km from Karimabad going towards Gulmit (7km short of Gulmit), Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan



Inspiring Journeys Begin with Cinnamon City Hotels



The world is waiting to travel and catch up on the last two years that left us confined. But the discerning new traveler is also looking for something beyond the norm. Asia is a melting pot of cultures, experience and more and the choices are endless. Among all that is on offer, what is it that makes the Pearl of the Indian Ocean so special?

Traditionally, Sri Lanka has been about sun, sea, smiles and history. It is time though that the world realizes that we have so much more to offer. The city of Colombo is evolving into a destination that culminates old world charm and modern living into every aspect of life. This is where Cinnamon City Hotels fits right in.

With three distinctly different properties bound by the signature Cinnamon experience, our City Hotels offer luxurious comfort at Cinnamon Grand, a resort experience in the city at Cinnamon Lakeside and minimalistic lean luxury at Cinnamon Red. We really

do have something to offer every type of traveler.

Cinnamon Grand is all about the finer comforts. Positioned as a Luxury Business Hotel and staying true to its name Cinnamon Grand offers travelers an array of meeting rooms and conference halls for any type of corporate gathering. Choose from eleven dining options, each with its unique twist including the recently relaunched signature Sri Lankan restaurant Nuga Gama or Colombo's finest seafood restaurant Lagoon among others. A stay at the Cinnamon Grand also guarantees rest and relaxation after tough times in the boardroom with poolside bars, a spa, gym and tennis courts.

Dubbed the Resort in the City, Cinnamon Lakeside offers breathtaking views of the Beira Lake, plush rooms with more scenic views and something for every member of the family. Enjoy delectable cuisine at one of the seven dining options including the only certified "original" Thai restaurant in the city. Cinnamon



Lakeside is the perfect place to escape the chaos of the city and bask in the comforts of Cinnamon hospitality.

For the modern, discerning traveler, the latest addition to the Cinnamon City Hotels portfolio is Cinnamon Red. It is our take on lean luxury where you pay for comforts that you really need and yet get to enjoy the benefits of Cinnamon's superior brand of hospitality. With rooms that spell minimalism to dining options that are more intimate, Cinnamon Red also has spectacular views of the city, best enjoyed at night from its stunning rooftop bar Cloud Red.

Autumn to Winter travel trends predict an inflow of tourist who want the best for the money they dish out. And at Cinnamon City Hotels this is constantly on our minds. This is why we have created experiences that are varied and easy to choose from depending on what you have your mind set on.

All our city properties are centrally located making them ideal centers for those who wish to explore the bustling city that Colombo is becoming. Near tourist attractions like historical sights, shopping malls, beaches, public parks, world markets and nightlife, Cinnamon City Hotels is truly a surprise package that one must experience at least once in a lifetime.

For more information visit www.cinnamonhotels.com



ALAGOAS

A Splendid Getaway with Secluded Beaches, Exquisite Gastronomy and Rich Culture

Alagoas is a small coastal state in the Northeast region of Brazil with a tropical coastline of palm trees, white-sand beaches, clear lagoons and coral reefs. Its capital city of Maceió has emerged as a popular vacation destination among both Brazilians and international tourists with stunning modern hotels by the coast, exciting adventure activities and eclectic restaurants and immersive cultural offerings.

Discover isolated, paradise-like stretches of white sand, emerald waters and quaint villages along the coast of Alagoas with your family and friends on your next trip to Brazil. Here are the top 3 things to explore when in Alagoas:

1. Beaches and adventure activities
2. Local Gastronomy
3. Rich history and culture

Discover the stunning beaches and adventure activities

Alagoas offers an oasis of peace and relaxation. Maragogi has become a hot spot for ecotourism in Brazil. It is a popular beach located in a wide tropical lagoon with coral reefs, attracting many

connoisseurs of scuba diving. Crystal clear waters combined with branched corals and mesmerising marine species, make it a great destination for snorkelling, suitable for beginners and pros alike. The coast here is a part of the Coral Coast protected area rich in fauna and flora.

The capital of Alagoas, Maceio has one of the most beautiful urban waterfronts in Brazil and is the largest city in Alagoas. Centrally located, it offers everything from city adventures to exotic beaches. Its main three beaches, Pajuçara, Ponta Verde and Jatiúca, are responsible for the city's success. Maceió's waterfront promenade draws attention to its local handicraft stalls and restaurants.

The city of São Miguel dos Milagres is popular among tourists looking for secluded and less-crowded beaches. The city has five beaches, one different from the other, all with unspoilt beauty, stunning coconut trees and natural pools. Besides beaches, São Miguel dos Milagres also offers other activities including a buggy ride, bike rides along the coast, raft rides and a viewpoint



overlooking the coast.

Discover the local gastronomy

The gastronomy of Brazil can best be described as a mix of native ingredients and foreign culinary influences, mostly Portuguese, West African, and Japanese. The cuisine is heavily influenced by coconut milk, as well as spices such as paprika, ginger, cumin, coriander and malagueta (a small and hot aromatic pepper) along with local exotic fruits, fresh and dried seafood and meat. A few must-try local dishes include Acarajé or Abará, popular Brazilian snacks consisting of black-eyed peas or beans that are mashed into a paste, then fried or steamed in a banana leaf. Other staple dishes in the north-eastern region are Sururu or local mussels and Carne de sol, salted sun-dried meat, traditionally prepared with either beef or goat meat.

Discover the rich history and culture

Brazil is a great destination to experience rich culture. The city

of Penedo in the south of Alagoas offers artistic and cultural heritage. Discover the history of the city and true Brazilian culture through the local photo exhibitions, musicals, concerts, street festivals and other spontaneous celebrations in the city. The small town of São Miguel dos Milagres is part of the Ecological Route, northern coast of Alagoas known for its simplicity and charming views.

How to get to Alagoas: Alagoas is 2.5 hours flight from Rio de Janeiro. Emirates offers direct flights to Rio de Janeiro from Dubai.

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THE LEADING HOTELS
OF THE WORLD®

Experience Malta in style this Winter Season Daily Flights by Emirates

FairyLand Santa's City, exciting Carnival Celebrations, and So Much More to Experience in Malta.



This winter season Emirates will offer daily flights to Malta starting 1st December from Dubai to Malta. Travelers can experience more convenience, and ease in planning their trip with these new added flights.

A visit to the Maltese Islands is a perfect opportunity to immerse yourself in centuries of history while enjoying the very best of modern life, with curated experiences to meet your personal desires. Centrally located at the heart of the Mediterranean, the Islands are versatile, flexible and dynamic retaining their long-held position as a favourite destination of choice for a winter getaway destination.

Daily Flights by Emirates from Dubai to Malta

Malta is strategically located in the heart of the Mediterranean with easy reach to all the major European capital cities, with just a three-hour flight to most European airport hubs. "For this winter season, Emirates will fly daily to Malta. Tourists can experience more flexibility to explore the beautiful islands of Malta on their

own terms. With daily flights, it's easier for travelers to get to Malta, whether on a last-minute spontaneous trip, or something long planned." says Claude Zammit Trevisan, Senior Manager, Destination Marketing at Malta Tourism Authority.

Malta targets the UAE and Gulf Countries as a key strategic market for tourism promotion. Earlier in October, MTA participated in the 'ME Travel Caravan' held in Dubai and Riyadh on 11th & 12th October for travel agents and other trade partners. MTA positioned Malta as the destination and partner of choice for the UAE's travel agents, tourism industry partners and leisure-seeking residents. The Maltese tourism delegation gave an overview of Malta's unique experiences, luxury lifestyle and the signature international events. The presentation highlighted the unique experiences and hospitality provided by Malta.

Mr Trevisan further added "Malta looks forward to welcome everyone and it has plenty to offer, whether they're a romantic couple searching for a long-weekend getaway, a group of friends

seeking adventure, art and history buffs, or explorers. With its great climate, Malta is a dreamlike Mediterranean archipelago that continues to exude elegance and vibrancy. Fascinating history, excellent cuisine and beautiful natural scenery makes Malta an ideal vacation choice at any time of the year. The travelers can experience the Maltese islands, for the perfect winter getaway holiday destination”.

Extravagant Winter Events in Malta

While the Emirates flights provides visitors with more freedom of choice and convenience to travel, the winter events in Malta highlight the finest of the islands in perhaps the most exquisite way imaginable.

Following the success of the Rolex Middle Sea Race and other iconic events and festivals in Malta, VisitMalta has expanded their portfolio of international shows and festivals to offer travelers a choice of curated experiences created exclusively for Malta.

AMORA by Cirque du Soleil

AMORA by Cirque du Soleil will be presented in the capital city of Valletta, at the historic Mediterranean Conference Centre, from November 24 to December 18, 2022. AMORA by Cirque du Soleil is a celebration of the magnetic force of love. It is a love letter to the beauty and richness of Malta, and to the circus arts. The story centres around a clumsy but lovable character, Bruno. Gazing up at the skies of La Valette, he sets eyes on a mysterious woman, Loulou. Captivated, he tries to climb up to her balcony to reach her, but she flies away and vanishes out of sight.

Fairyland

Malta is extremely popular for its Fairyland Festival, where Pjazza Tritoni in Valletta will be transformed into Santa’s City this Christmas from the 8th of December to 6th of January 2023! At Santa’s City, there will be enjoyment for everyone. This year, a World Cup Village will be set up for all international football supporters to come together and cheer for their favourite team whilst enjoying



drinks and good food.

In addition to the rides and attractions, visitors will find a Christmas Market where they can indulge in a variety of Festive Food and Drink options! Santa Claus, together with his elves, will be in residence at Fairyland, ready to meet children from all over the world, compile his Naughty and Nice list and even get a head-start on delivering gifts. Fairyland guarantees a magical outing for the entire family.

Valletta Baroque Festival

The 11th Edition of the Valletta Baroque Festival is under way, and it is as eclectic as ever. After two agonizingly long years of postponements due to the pandemic, now the splendid programme commences from the 11th to 29th January 2023.

The festival has treated audiences to a unique event featuring some of the best soloists and ensembles in the baroque music scene. This

prestigious two-week festival plays out within many wonderful baroque and historical venues, such as St. John's Co-Cathedral and The Verdala Palace. The festival highlights the enormous versatility of the baroque idiom and its

mass appeal. Above all, the festival's strength lies in the wonderful baroque settings that one finds in Valletta and the Maltese archipelago; a precious legacy that each and every one treasures.

Malta and the sister Islands Gozo and Comino

Malta is stunning in its beauty. Its charm lies in rocky coves, bays, cliffs and a few sandy beaches. The landscape of Malta and Gozo is dominated by limestone deposits. The limestone is quarried and used in construction, giving the urban landscape a rich, honey-coloured hue. Gozo is significantly greener than Malta. The island is less developed providing an air of tranquillity. Its most notable physical features are its hills. They are distinct landmarks, visible from miles away and providing superb sea views.



Ashar Valley

The world's new bucket-list desert retreat

Located in a stunning natural landscape of the ancient desert city of AlUla, Northwestern Arabia, Banyan Tree AlUla officially opened to guests on October 21, announcing the completion of the resort offer in the majestic Ashar Valley hub.

The five star all-villa resort is Banyan Tree's debut property in the region and is designed to blend seamlessly into its environment. Infused with elements from the nomadic nature of Nabataean design and heritage, the resort epitomises the Banyan Tree commitment to local influence, drawing on both the breathtaking natural landscapes and the Bedouin culture, which has inhabited the area for centuries. The 79-villa resort offers an immersive, multi-sensory experience inspired by the tranquil and magnificent surroundings.

Banyan Tree AlUla joins the adjacent luxury property, Habitas Resort AlUla, which opened late 2021 and offers sustainable, experience-led hospitality. Habitas continues to fortify its status as an industry disruptor with its focus on community, music, wellness, arts and creativity – pillars that perfectly embody a destination that has been the crossroad of civilisations and meeting point for cultures for millennia. As well as the 96-villa resort, Habitas AlUla offers Caravan by Habitas, providing an accommodation offer with a difference. In the valley overlooking the oasis, these luxury retro RVs are perfect for intrepid travellers looking for an even more outdoor glamping experience, with the unique hospitality and F&B delivered by Habitas.

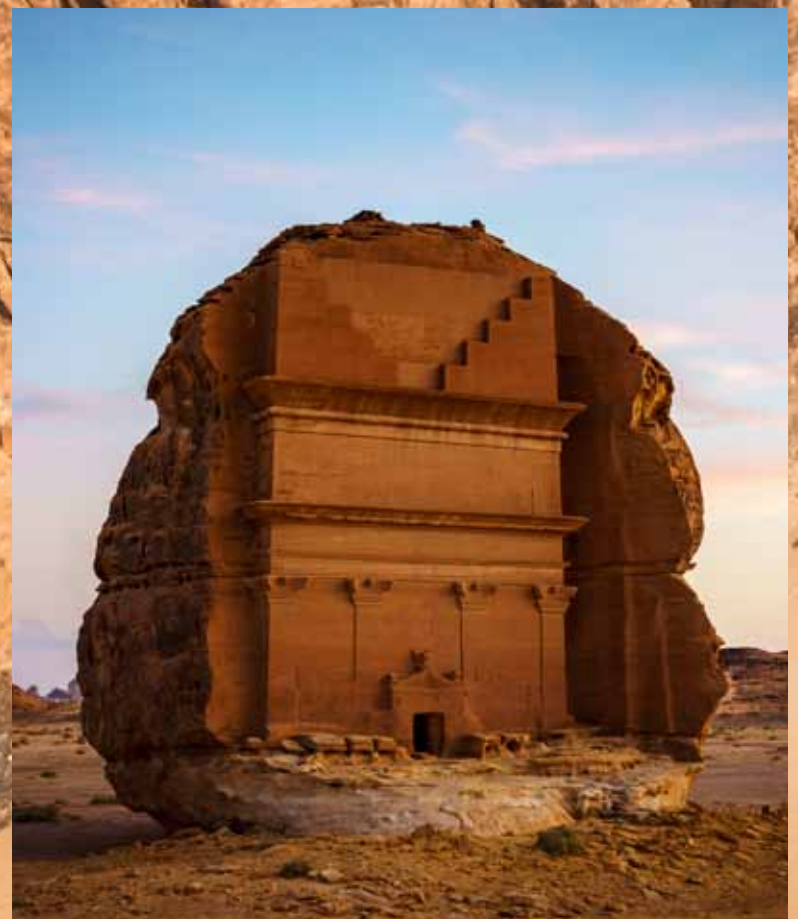
MARAYA EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Maraya acts like a mirage in the desert with its mirror-clad exterior reflecting the beauty of the surrounding mountains and sand dunes.

Currently hosting the AlUla Moments winter concert series, Maraya can accommodate a diversity of events from the up and coming OneRepublic and John Legend concerts this November to business events such as the prestigious Hegra Conference of Nobel Laureates and Friends.

DINING AT ASHAR VALLEY

With the addition of Banyan Tree AlUla's two new restaurants, Ashar Valley now offers an exciting mix of dining options from regional to the first Thai restaurant in AlUla - all in stunning settings.





Saffron is Banyan Tree's signature Thai restaurant and offers guests the quintessential taste of contemporary Thai Cuisine prepared by Thai chefs, the first of its kind in Saudi AlUla. The scent of lemongrass, the unmistakable flavors of coconut milk and spices, give guests the true taste of Thailand in the heart of Arabia.

Bringing a taste of all things local, from cuisine to arts and crafts, Harrat is Banyan Tree AlUla's ode to North West Arabia and a true multi-sensory experience offering a range of dishes from seafood to Middle Eastern mezze, pasta, and fresh grilled meats.

At Habitas Resort AlUla, Tama restaurant - meaning 'here and now' in Aramaic - offers carefully crafted dishes and delicious drinks using some of the same spices traded on the incense route, bringing the unique flavours of the Arabian Peninsula to life.

ASHAR EXPLORATIONS

Art is on display in the Ashar Valley in the form of the rock formations, valleys and canyons shaped over millions of years by Mother Nature. It's also on display through the canyon that Habitas AlUla calls home with artworks from Desert X AlUla 2020 edition still on display including the interactive trampolines "Now You SEE ME, Now You Don't" by Manal Al Dowayan, and Lita Albuquerque's electric blue sculpture of a woman "NAJMA", seated in a meditative lotus pose overseeing the activities at Habitas.

experiencealula.com



THIS IS NAMIBIA...

Situated along the southwestern coast of the African continent, Namibia is truly a land of remarkable contrast. With a land surface of 824,292 km², it is four times the size of Great Britain.

Despite its size, it is one of the most sparsely populated countries in Africa, with an estimated population of about 2.5 million people. The small population is largely because Namibia is the most arid country south of the Sahara. Average annual rainfall varies from 10mm along the coast to 700mm in the northeast.

Namibia is truly a country of "blue skies and sunshine", and all-in-all provides travellers to the area with an agreeable climate. The summer months (Oct-Apr) can become hot with temperatures hitting 35°C or higher in the north and south. Winter days (May-Sept) are pleasant, but temperatures can become quite cold, dropping below zero in mid-winter. For visitors along the coast, fog conditions are quite common, although it does tend to lift in mid-morning, settling in again

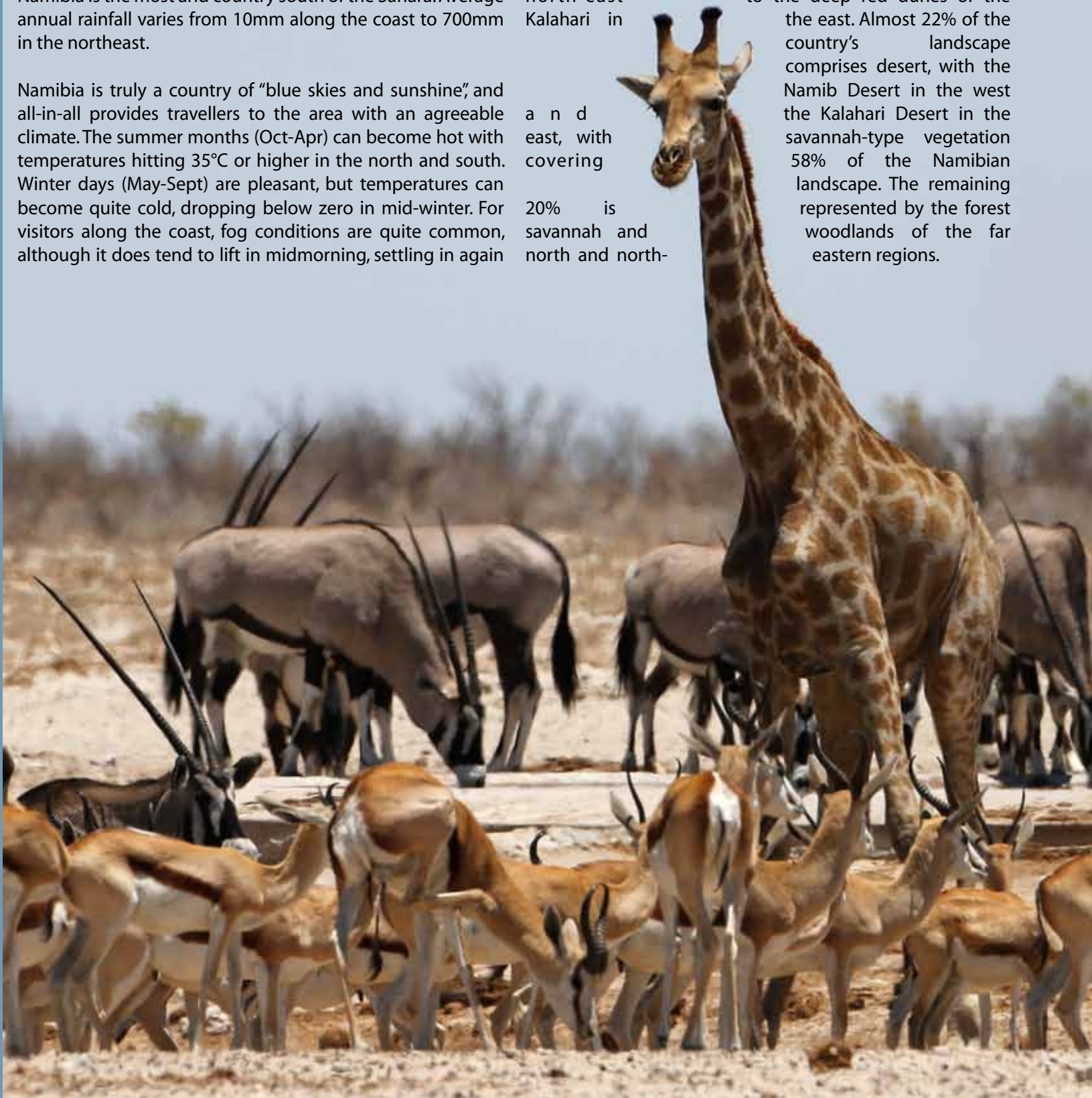
during the late afternoons. Namibia's generally clear skies, sparse population and unpolluted air ensure that it's ranked as one of the best destinations to embark on stargazing.

The country provides visitors with breath-taking views with its extensive range of ever-changing landscapes, from the giant Sossusvlei dunes to the stormy seas of the Skeleton Coast, to the woodlands and waterways of the north-east to the deep red dunes of the Kalahari in

and east, with covering

20% is savannah and north-

to the deep red dunes of the the east. Almost 22% of the country's landscape comprises desert, with the Namib Desert in the west the Kalahari Desert in the savannah-type vegetation 58% of the Namibian landscape. The remaining represented by the forest woodlands of the far eastern regions.





Namibia's people are diverse, ranging from the pastoral Himba in the northwest, to the San in the east. The major population groups are the Owambo, which consists of eight tribes, the Kavango consisting of five tribes, the Damara, Nama and Herero. Smaller groups include the Mafwe and Masubia of the Caprivi, the Basters, San, Coloured, Tswana and Whites of European descent. Each of the varied cultural groups has its unique traditions and cultural traits that contribute to the richness of Namibia's cultural heritage and identity. Due to this diversity, English is the chosen official language for ease of communication.

Colonised by Germany in 1884, Namibia was administered by South Africa from 1917 to 1990. Then, Namibia's SWAPO (Southwest Africa People's Organization) began waging a liberation battle against its neighbour's which finally led to

the implementation of the United Nations Resolution 435 of 1989 that called for free and fair elections. Namibia gained its independence on 21 March 1990, while Walvis Bay enclave was re-integrated on 1 March 1994. Today the Republic of Namibia republic is ruled by a multiparty parliament under a democratic constitution highly regarded by the international community. The Government's policy of national reconciliation and unity embraces the concepts of tolerance, respect for differing political views, freedom of the press and racial and ethnic harmony. To date, Namibia boasts a proud record of uninterrupted peace and stability.

The economy centres around agriculture, fishing, mining and tourism. Namibia is one of the top diamond-producing countries in the world, while uranium, copper, lead and zinc are other important minerals.





Selects Embraer E195-E2 for the next stage of growth



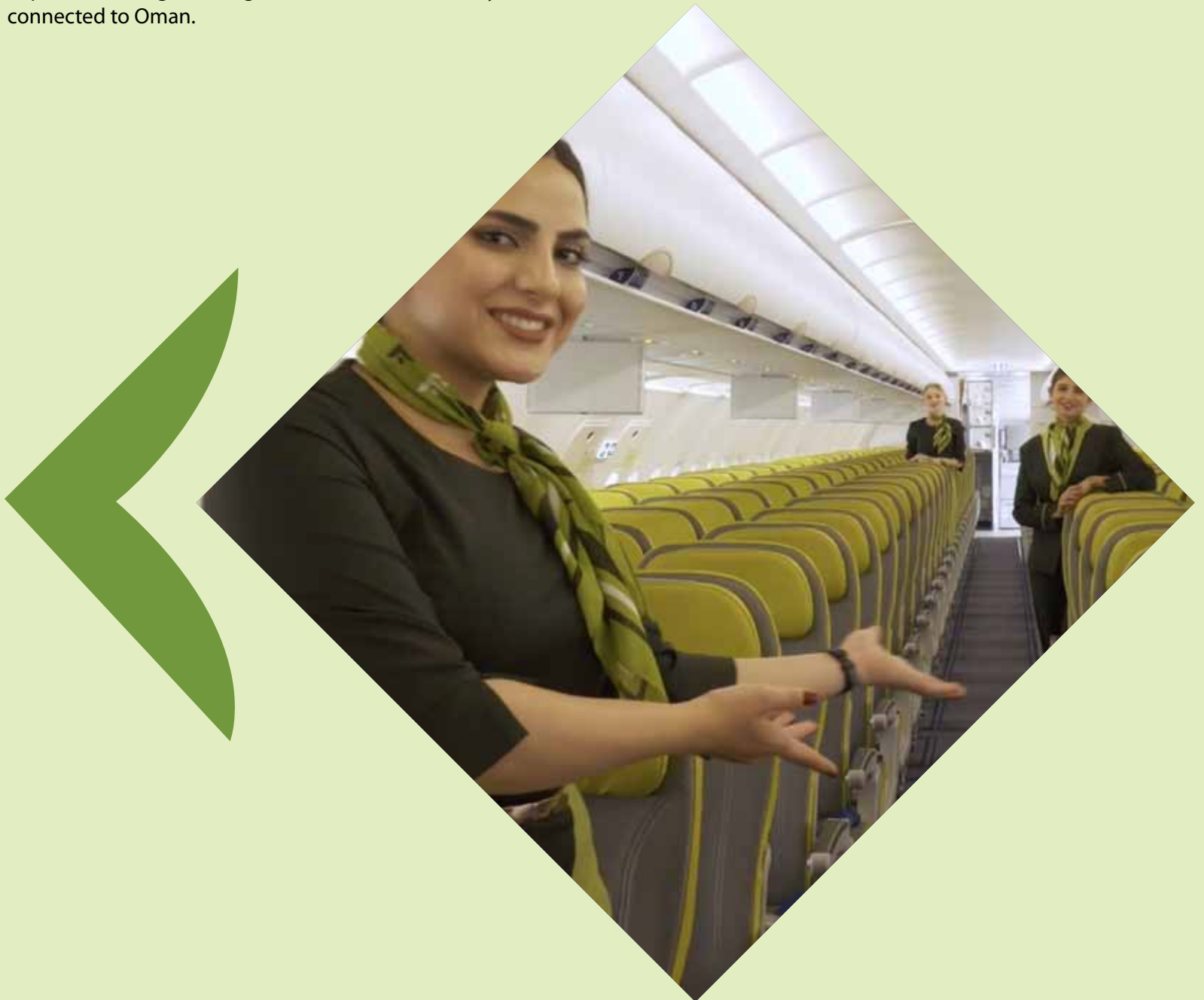
SalamAir, Oman's value-for-money airline, has announced a firm order for six Embraer E195-E2 passenger aircraft, with purchase rights for six more. With this, the airline will become the first Embraer E195-E2 operator in the Middle East.

The largest aircraft in the E-Jet E2 family, the E195-E2, has been designed for better capacity utilization and efficiency on low-

density routes. E195-E2 for SalamAir will be delivered in a comfortable dual-class configuration with 135 seats, starting in Q4 2023. The deal will be a huge step forward in Salam Air's growth plans. With the recent addition of its fleet portfolio, SalamAir fleets will reflect the diversity of market needs by having a capacity ranging from 212 seats in the Airbus 321neo, 180 seats in the Airbus 320neo and 135 seats of the Embraer

195-E2, which will include 3 Luban Class seats.

Captain Mohamed Ahmed, CEO of SalamAir, said, "The aircraft will grow to be a core part of our fleet portfolio. It is exhilarating for us to be the first airline in the Middle East to fly the incredible E195-E2. Embraer's aircraft represents the best environmental efficiency, operating performance, and passenger comfort. The aircraft's sophisticated aerodynamics, novel wing design and new technologies enable its exceptional energy efficiency. These aircraft are perfect for the next frontier of our growth. They will allow the airline to open new local and regional cities and increase its frequency to these destinations due to its fuel efficiency and capacity, which suits the needs of these markets. The new fleet will be used on domestic flights initially, including the 4 oil fields and 4 international airports within Oman, as we receive more aircraft, we will be able to use them on regional airports in neighbouring countries which today are not connected to Oman.



SalamAir's induction of Embraer's E195-E2 will complement its Airbus fleet of six A320neo and four A321neo.

SalamAir meets the nation's growing demand for affordable travel options and aims to generate further employment and business creation opportunities in various sectors in Oman. In a short span, SalamAir has grown in its operations and expanded its reach across the region, serving customers across a cross-section of society.

SalamAir flies to domestic destinations, including Muscat, Salalah, Suhar, and Duqm international destinations to Dubai, Doha, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Kuwait, Bahrain, Sarajevo, Istanbul, Trabzon, Bursa, Kathmandu, Baku, Phuket, Prague, Shiraz, Tehran, Alexandria, Khartoum, Multan, Sialkot, Karachi, Dhaka, Chattogram, Jaipur, Trivandrum, and Lucknow. SalamAir flies directly from Suhar to Shiraz, Salalah and Calicut, and Trabzon from Salalah to Calicut and Prague.

AL BALEED RESORT SALALAH BY ANANTARA

Famed for the riches of its frankincense groves, coconut-fringed beaches and a profusion of tropical greenery during the summer monsoon season, Salalah, on the south coast of Dhofar, offers intrepid travellers an emerging destination of breathtaking natural beauty. Situated between a long, scenic beach and freshwater lagoon, Al Baleed Resort Salalah by Anantara brings a new level of luxury and refinement to the region, allowing discerning guests to discover the unique charms of southern Oman.

Conveniently located just 15 km from the airport, the resort sits within easy reach of Salalah city centre and an abundance of cultural treasures. As the oldest independent state in the Arab world, the region is defined by a rich history, with a wealth of archaeological sites, imposing forts, frankincense trees and vibrant souqs for those looking to tune into the spirit of old Arabia.

Striking and authentic architecture is framed by lush tropical gardens, walkways surrounded by 691 palm trees and eye-catching water features to create an air of tranquillity and serenity. Comprising 136 rooms and villas, the resort offers indulgent luxury with handcrafted furnishings and rich textures throughout to enhance the contemporary Middle Eastern ambience. Overlooking either the Arabian Sea, lagoon or picturesque gardens, each room is equipped with contemporary comforts including interactive LED TVs, spacious walk-in dressing rooms and luxurious Amouage bath products, evoking the region's indigenous fragrances. The resort's 40 Rooms and Suites all feature a spacious bedroom, ensuite bathroom with rain shower and separate bathtub, walk-in dressing room and media hubs with portable Bluetooth speakers alongside a terrace or balcony. Meanwhile, eight one-bedroom Villas and 88 one and two-bedroom Pool Villas entice guests with personalised villa host services and separate living areas, with Pool Villas benefiting from private temperature-controlled swimming pools, the first of their kind in Salalah. The exclusive three-bedroom Royal Beach Pool Villa is the epitome of luxury, boasting commanding views of the sandy bay and idyllic lagoon.

Three exquisite dining venues showcase an array of vibrant cuisines. All-day dining restaurant Sakalan presents world flavours served by open kitchens, while South East Asian restaurant Mekong takes guests on a journey along the legendary river with vibrant Thai, Chinese and Vietnamese cuisine, and Al Mina, a relaxed Mediterranean beach bar and restaurant serves well-crafted cocktails and shisha.



This November, Al Baleed Resort Salalah by Anantara will be bringing together some of the world's top Michelin-starred chefs for a culinary extravaganza. The only luxury international food festival of its kind in Oman will see chefs from the UK, France, Germany and Portugal host six days of interactive workshops and gourmet dinners. Held from 22 – 27 November 2022, the Al Baleed Food Festival is returning to the beachside resort for a second time following its success in 2021 in what will become an annual event. This year's highlights include: Three Michelin starred German chef, Thomas Bühner as well as chefs from

Portugal, the Netherlands and France from Michelin-starred restaurants.

Guests also benefit from a state-of-the-art fitness centre, tennis court, beach volleyball court and stunning infinity pool. A separate kids' and teens' club offers fun-filled activities. During the winter months,

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Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort

Extreme landscape of
rugged beauty



Perched 2,000 metres above sea level on the curving rim of a great canyon, Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort is a secluded haven for the intrepid and discerning. Guests hover over an extreme landscape of rugged beauty while they discover a cultured treasury of authentic indulgences and immersions in the destination's rich heritage. The highest luxury resort in the Middle East and amongst the highest in the world, Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort is a luxurious base from which to explore this extraordinary corner of Oman.

Long inaccessible, Al Jabal Al Akhdar (Arabic for "The Green Mountain") is a towering massif on the Sultanate of Oman's vast Saiq Plateau. Dramatic peaks ring the setting. Prince Charles and the late Diana, Princess of Wales once sought out its breathtaking heights and scenic views in November 1986. Today, the arrival experience takes guests on an adventurous drive – two hours from Muscat International Airport or four and half hours from Dubai – past date plantations, dry riverbeds known locally as wadis, and historical forts. The resort echoes this fortified architecture, placing guests in modern ramparts inspired by the commanding indigenous citadels and re-imagined with sophisticated contemporary interiors.

A total of 115 luxury rooms and villas overlook either the dramatic canyon or tranquil gardens. Each features its own indigenous luxuries from custom-made Omani furniture to Amouage bath products evoking the region's indigenous fragrances. The resort's 82 Premier and Deluxe Rooms boast a spacious bedroom, amongst the largest in the country, each with views of the dramatic canyon and a spa-like bathroom carved out of sustainable material from the local area, complete with a rain shower and separate bath alongside a balcony. Meanwhile, the 33 villas grant guests an intimate escape each with personal villa host services and a private infinity pool overlooking the cliffs or hidden in an exotic garden. Guests have the choice of either one or two bedrooms or the exclusive Three Bedroom Royal Mountain Villa. Each villa features state-of-the-art interactive LED IPTVs and spacious living area, all adding to a sense of sublime luxury.

With a selection of five restaurants and lounges to choose from, guests can indulge their senses with experiences ranging from a fine dining Arabian grill concept and poolside Mediterranean restaurant to an all-day international dining restaurant serving world classics and a rooftop shisha lounge, with the pleasant climate allowing for year-round alfresco dining. Other highlights at the resort include a cliff-edge infinity pool and a state-of-the-art Fitness Centre, tennis court and world-acclaimed Anantara Spa. Harnessing the essence of Arabia, the spa welcomes guests with ancient hammam rituals, five treatment suites, private outdoor relaxation areas and separate male and female indoor swimming pools.

The Royal Edge, an all-glass platform is set to deliver an intimate and bespoke dining experience. Outfitted with a glass floor that extends all to the very edge of the canyon, The Royal Edge presents guests with an incomparable canyon stage and is only accessible through Anantara's signature 'Dining by Design' experience.





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Muscat Lounge



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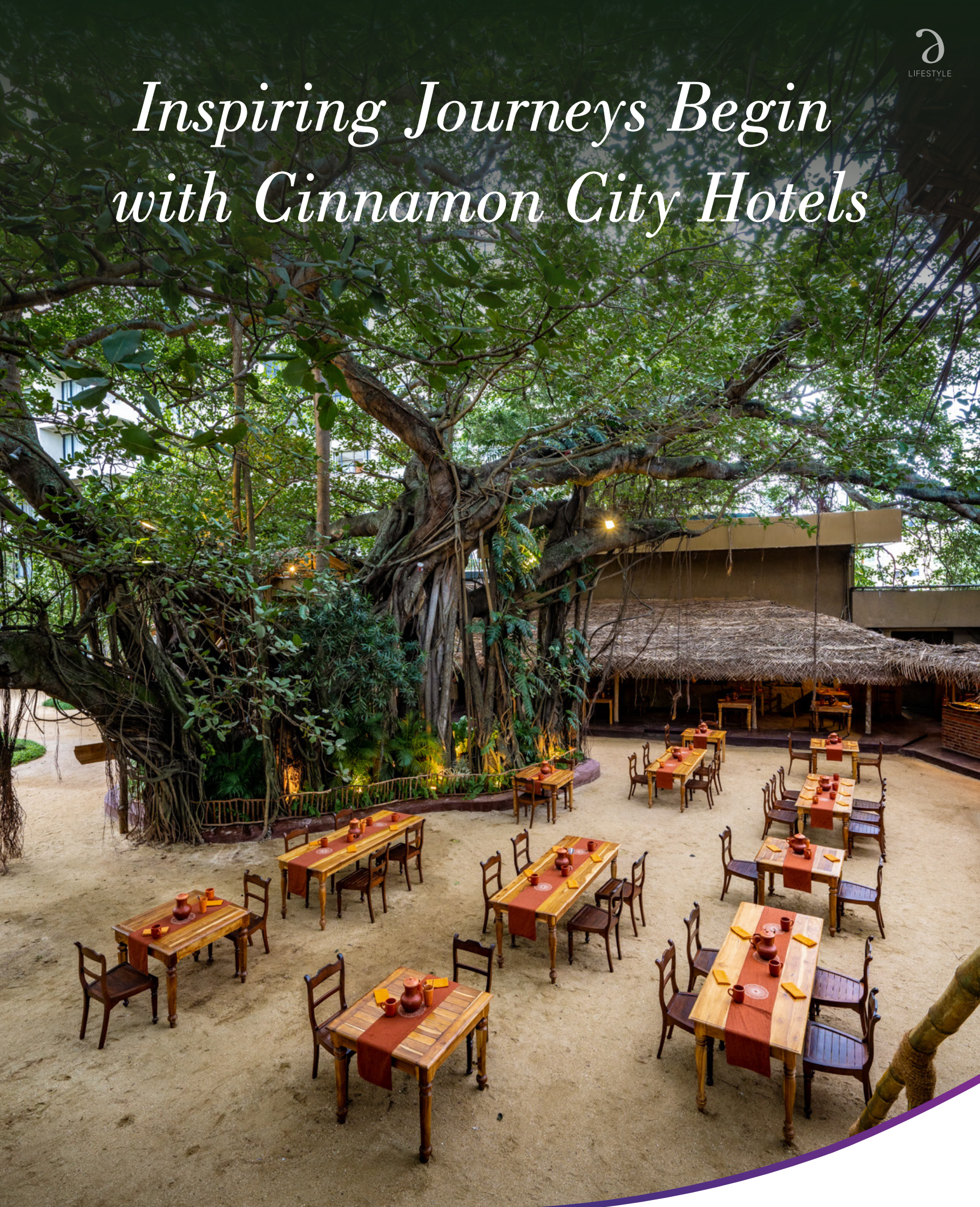
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