

OSAKA TRAVEL NEWSLETTER

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Osaka Group
Travel Management Company



www.osakaair.com

FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

Dear Members of the Osaka Family,

As we all know, tourism is one of the most crucial economic sectors in the world. Even the United Nations (UN) reported that the sector employs one in every ten people on earth and provides livelihood to hundreds of millions. Just like global performance, tourism plays a major role in the inclusive economic growth and sustainable development of our country. India's cultural diversity and breathtaking geographical landscape have been attracting global tourists. Hence, it is one of the top tourist destinations in the world with unparalleled hospitality records. Factually, tourism accounts for over 2.5% of the Indian GDP and contributes over 194 billion INR (World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2018). Also, Indian tourism has been responsible for contributing to 12.75% of total employment while generating over 87.5 million jobs in the economy. And so in the pre-Covid19 era, the Indian tourism sector produced over 29.9 billion USD as foreign exchange earnings.

With a humble beginning in 1993 as Osaka Air Travels a small travel agency right decisions at the right time by adding product verticals and maintaining the quality in customer relations have transformed into Osaka Group a Leading Travel Management company (with 6 different companies under Osaka Group) in the travel industry since 27 years. Among these, five are fully focusing their entire services to deliver excellent & innovative products / services in the travel trade only. Osaka Edu Care the 6th company is providing a high end quality overseas education consultation globally.

Our dedication to customers, innovating the way we interact with them & striving to deliver excellent services has made us eligible of the below which makes sure we are confident in maintaining the positions bestowed on us

- **Topmost visa submission agent through VFS in Kerala**
- **Topmost walk in Customer handling agent**
- **Pioneer agents in Travel Trade**
- **All Travel services under one roof**

I am delighted to launch our monthly newsletter so as to communicate the updates in the travel industry and our company keeps our clients, trade partners & our employees across the Globe on the Digital Platform. While we plan confidently for the coming years and the decades & looking back to the way we have grown we could enlist the secret sauce that might have played vital role in maintaining the consistency in service delivery & sustaining our growth.

OSAKA GROUP SECRET SAUCE

- Quality of Customer Relations.
- Providing Consistent Quality of Service.
- Service based on Ethics & Sincerity.
- Adapting to the changes in the world and restructuring and redesigning our business model.
- Standing by and for the Travel Fraternity and professionalism in each act we engage in.



Dr. PB Boss
Chairman & Founder

OUR PLANS FOR 2022 & THE WAY FORWARD

Geographical expansion as always exciting to observe the growth on the way we transform and replicate the services in new locations with people of different culture. Our intention is to start new branches in Chennai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad & Chandigarh during the first few quarters of 2022 .

We would like to digitally enable our operations & the way we interact with customers through our in-house CRM. Our HRMS would keep a track on our vital asset Human Resource giving guidance & inputs on how to handle the growth with consistency by maintaining the most skilled, pro active and sincere staff's dedicated to the industry and to instill loyalty by gifting them with the world's best workplace to engage in.

As on the product side the year 2022 would be one of the most eventful year for the company and the industry as Osaka group would be introducing the world's first GLOBAL TRAVEL HYPER MARKET under the brand OSAKACONNECT.COM. Our flagship portal,

Osakaconnect.com is a one-of-a-kind portal that integrates various 24 travel-related services in a single platform.

We are confident that this venture would create a revolution in the travel industry and would enable and empower who are ready for the Digital Transformation of business as our intention is to 'GROW TOGETHER'. Osaka Group is working towards being the world leader in travel management trade.

Osaka Group of companies aims to contribute to the Indian economy by facilitating and easing the movement of people and generating more employment. We intend to bloom and grow into an MNC by 2025 by enlarging our outreach and performance in the tourism sector. Also, there has indeed been uneasiness and apprehensions regarding the new variant of Omicron, but we hope that the year 2022 will be more kind and prosperous to all of us. And so, on the behalf of the company and the Osaka family, I extend warm Christmas and happy New Year 2022 to all of you.



Mrs. Bissy Boss
Director

Though the youngest vertical company of Osaka Group, Osaka Educare is growing up as a strong pillar of the group, providing services to all other vertical companies.

Educare has completed two successful years in overseas education consultation. Within this short period, we are accredited by British Council, ICEF and QEAC which add golden feathers to the entire group as well.

Currently Educare is doing UK, Canada, Dubai and USA. Soon we will be starting to assist students to continue their studies with promising courses in Bosnia, Italy and Germany.

Educare is mainly focussing quality service to our students. Along with consultation, we do assist in IELTS coaching, SOP and resume creation, fee transfer, CA attestation, medical appointments, interview training, biometric appointment, visa filing and pre departure counselling.

We do appreciate the continuous support from all our colleagues till today.



Jayaraj PS
General Manager

HASSLE FREE TRAVEL DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The concept of travel is in the blood of Human and Animal from the beginning itself. So, whatever happens people will travel for their sustainability, leisure, pleasure, peace etc. otherwise people will find out a reason to travel. But in this pandemic they should follow many rules of respective countries, states, even small places; however people will travel that's for sure.

Hassle free travel in the pandemic is a knowledge grabbing stage of each traveller. Knowledge updating process in this digital era is not at all a tough thing but of course the right information from the right and trustable source matters a lot to ease the travel process of each traveller. There are many reputed travel agencies globally with passionate team members in the travel industry like us (Osaka Group). Who take care of their travellers personally by passing the correct information at the correct time regarding airline, route, destinations, accommodations, transfers, Covid-19 protocols etc.

As a commitment to the industry and our customers we are developing innovative and tech oriented touch points with our customers. We have ensured that our posts on Social media are more of informative and educative intentions. Also we make sure that we promote the destinations & the travel products based on the travel feasibility to the destinations. Osaka team is committed to giving the right information at the right times through credible & authoritative sources. Our all new newsletter too would be committed to giving information and advises which help in building confidence of the traveller.

Hassle free travel is a process created from the pure and correct knowledge from the correct team at the correct time.

TREKKING TALES

Exploring the destinations on foot & being with nature is the best way to unwind and unlearn.
A glimpse of my recent trekking trip to Munnar

By Adarsh

CHOKRAMUDI PEAK

Chokramudi is one of the highest peaks in Munnar offering a thrilling trekking experience for enthusiasts. This is a scenic trek through varying landscapes such as the hardy volcanic rock face, thick shola forest and through grasslands and through tea plantation. It is one of the difficult routes to climb but the mountains with beautiful aerial views of tea plantations, forest cover and paddy fields in the distance inspire you to climb the same. During ideal weather we have a chance to catch a glimpse of the rare Nilgiri Tahr, an endangered species of mountain goat and to spot few of our endemic birds and plants. One can see the best sunrise at the top of the peak.

Key attractions: *Trekking, Lockhart Estate, Sunrise, Wildlife spotting.*

TOP VALLEY TREK

This trek requires a 29 km (45 minutes to 01 hour) drive from Munnar to the starting point of the trek at Yellapetty. The drive takes us through one of the most scenic routes in Munnar covering Mattupetty dam, Echo point and Kundala Dam, with a good chance of sighting wild elephants on the way. The trek route will pass through the Yellapetty village and into Shola forest with narrow paths uphill through the mountain ridge with spectacular views. For the descent, we walk through a tea plantation all the way to Top station. This trek is ideal for nature lovers because it gives us a good opportunity to see most of the endemic birds, flora and fauna in Munnar. During the rains there are chances to encounter leeches, and therefore bring leech socks.

Key attractions: *Yellapetty village, Kundala Dam, Sunrise, Trekking.*



CHINNAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary is located 60 km from Munnar which is around two hours drive, passing through Marayoor sandalwood forest to the start of the trek. It is situated in the rain-shadow of the mighty Western Ghats and therefore the dominant vegetation is the thorny scrub forest interspersed with patches of semi-deciduous forest. Here one could see the yellow-throated bulbul, white bellied drongo, blue-faced malkhova, yellow-legged buttonquail, blue bearded bee eater etc. Additionally, Chinnar harbors a vibrant reptile population. The trek will start through the scrub jungle for an hour and a half, and continue on to riverine forest where there is a high chance of spotting birds and amphibians. Chinnar is well-known for the critically endangered grizzled giant squirrel, Asiatic elephants, sambhar deer, dhole and Indian gaur.

Key attractions: *Kootar Trek, Eravikulam Park, 8th mile, Thoovanam waterfalls, Marayoor, Wildlife Spotting*

PAMBADUM SHOLA NATIONAL PARK

Pambadum Shola National park is the smallest national park in Kerala. It is located 36 km from Munnar town towards Top Station. The drive to Pambadum shola National Park, lasting around an hour, will take us through a few of the popular and scenic spots of Munnar like Mattupetty Dam, Echo-Point, Kundala Dam, Top Station etc. The trek through the national park will be done with assistance of a person from the Forest Department. The trek lasts for 2 to 3 hours and is completely through the Shola forest, which are unique in the world and hosts a diversity of fauna and flora specific to the Sholas. We could spot most of the endemic birds of this region like Nilgiri Flycatcher, Kerala Laughing thrush, Black and rufous flycatcher, Nilgiri wood pigeon and a lot more. Also, this national park is also known for Indian Gaur, Sambar deer, Nilgiri langur, Nilgiri Marten, Malabar giant squirrel and possibly, elephants. In case of rains, there is a high of possibility of leeches in the area. So do carry leech socks if you are visiting during Monsoon.

Key attractions: *Mattupetty Dam, Top Station, Rich diversity of flora and fauna, Wildlife spotting.*

LOCKHART TEA TRAIL

Lockhart tea estate is situated 8Kms away from Munnar town towards the Thekkady/Madurai road and will take about 30 minutes from Munnar town. The 1600-acre Lockhart tea plantations are tucked in the slopes of Chokarmudy hills. Lockhart tea factory, built in 1857 by Harrisons and Crossfield, is one of the oldest tea factories still following the orthodox method of tea processing, methods to produce superior quality Green tea, Black tea and the expensive White tea as well. The walk through the Lockhart estate will be amidst green carpeted tea fields with stunning views. We can opt for a plantation tour lasting from 30 min to 03 - 04 hours here. During the tour, we can meet the ladies picking tea leaves, depending on the area where they are picking (Sunday Holiday).

Key attractions: *Devikulam route via signal point (the cigarette point)/erachipara, Lockhart Plantation walk.*

KOLUKKUMALAI

Kolukkumalai is a small tea plantation village near Munnar. It is renowned as one of the highest tea plantations in the world. Also, the tea grown in this region is supposed to have the best flavor because of the high altitude. After visiting this amazing plantation, you will get a chance to see the processing of tea in one of the tea factories. This is the perfect opportunity for you to learn more about the work that goes into tea manufacturing. The next time you sip a cup of tea, you will be able to remember this beautiful experience. Also it is one of the highest camping in South India. Camping in Kolukkumalai is one of the perfect ways to cross over the lush meadows of Western Ghats and to experience serenity in the lap of nature. It is a drive of 25 km through the beautiful valleys of tea plantations and the Lockhart gap, to reach the village of Suryanelli. From here, one can either trek / board a jeep to travel through rugged road to the world's highest organic tea growing estate. We can enjoy the spectacular scenic views of Tamil Nadu and Meesapulimala, the second highest peak in S. India, etc.(depending on weather conditions).

Key attractions: *Theni View, Korangani village, Kodaikanal hills, Palani Hills, Sunrise, Suryanelli Estate walk.*



MEESAPULIMALA

This is the second highest peak of South India at 2,640 meters (8,661 ft) above sea level. This trek will involve a drive covering Mattupetty and Echo Point to Silent Valley tea estate to the start point of the trek. We will start our ascent through Eucalyptus plantations, pine forest, and shola forest passing a seasonal waterfall on the way. You can catch a glimpse of the tall Meesapulimala on the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border covered with rolling grasslands in two hours from the start of the trek. Since this trek is under Kerala forest department, it is completely safe for all people. You have to reach the campsite on your own or hire a jeep from Munnar town to Meesapulimala Basecamp. Reach the peak by 6 am to witness one of the best sunrises of your lifetime. The best recommendation is to stay at Rhodo Mansion which is the closest starting point of the Meesapulimala trek. One can witness the sunrise just 500 m from Rhodo Mansion and the speed of the wind at night which makes the place cooler at night.

Key attractions: *Silent Valley estate, Kuttiyar Valley, Rhodo Mansion Stay / Silent valley base camp stay, Neelakurinji flowers, Sunrise, Trekking, Wildlife spotting, Viewing different points such as Idukki arch dam, anayirangal dam, Mathikettan Shola, Chokramudi, Kodaikanal, Madurai (if sky is clear), Rhododendron flower, Neelakurinji flower, etc.*



WE ARE JUST BEGINNING TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

Two years after the pandemic hit the travel industry we can now confidently say that travel is here to stay and people would keep exploring. Now it is just a matter of time when the countries announce the opening of borders and easing the travel restrictions that people would start exploring both the visited, trending and new destinations. Here we are just listing the changes that would be vital driving factors during the post pandemic travel.

1) TRAVEL CONSULTANTS WOULD BE A MANDATE

The travel of coming years would require more advises from the Travel Consultants ever from COVID protocols to the new destinations coming up the travel consultants are going to be the key.

Getting the right information from the right sources is vital and Travel Consultants having access with personal relations to embassies, tourism boards, airlines, DMC's across the globe through their work spaces would have a matrix of information which just has to be served to the travellers in the right format.

2) FLEXIBILITY IS THE KEY

Unlike the pre pandemic era where the bookings were controlled by restrictions and conditions, the future bookings are to be governed by the risk factor as the customers would always keep the booking stage at a later phase nearer to the travel dates to avoid cancellation charges & refund process.

Keeping the booking terms & payment process flexible would enhance the confidence of travelers.

3) STAYCATIONS / WORKATIONS

Being close to the home yet having a mood for an Holiday is the safest way to enjoy your Holidays for the coming few months. A drive for 2-3 hours and reaching different landscapes and being close to their homes would give them an emotional security that in case of any unexpected events they are still a few hours away which actually evades the feeling of insecurity of being stuck at a new destinations flight/rail journey away from home.

Also more and more employers gaining confidence in employees for the Work from Home Format and its positive impact on the overheads which in turn enhances

their profitability, the companies would also roll out special incentives or allowances for working from exciting locations which would increase the productivity and also morale of the employees.

4) A NEW ERA OF ROAD TRIPS & SELF DRIVES

As these days the protocols & regulations at airports and railway stations keep changing every other day road trips & self drive trips are a safer bet to travel hassle free. Such trips keeping the mode of flexibility open to reroute, pause & deviate which at times add to the value of the travel and help us in exploring unexplored destinations or tourists spots which would never have been visited in the usual bucket lists.

5) LESSER DURATIONS

As we are all prone to the 'testing the waters syndrome' since young age; travel pattern too would follow a similar pattern, travelers would pick up choices near to homes and for shorter durations.

How each and every factor in addition to the above would affect the travel patterns are a concern worth waiting for the results. But working towards the trends of the future, launching innovative products & transforming to Digital platforms to communicate with customers is the key to tapping the needs of the travel market. **Osaka Group as a team is committed to the customers and carry on the legacy it has carried since 28 years and still counting confident.**

By Sharathchandran S.

DIGITAL ERA OF TOURISM

If you wanted to book a flight back in the 1950s, it would have taken 90 minutes to manually to process the reservation, and the ticket would have cost more than today in real terms.

Once on the plane, beyond the in-flight magazine, there was a lack of in-flight entertainment.

In today's digital age where bookings are confirmed in a split second and an entire trip can be planned with a few taps of the finger, it's hard to imagine life back in the "golden age of travel".

Thanks to technology, travelling today is more affordable, accessible and convenient than ever before.

The recent outbreak of COVID-19 is a real-time challenge that is affecting every part of the world. Directly from the health sector to other vital segments like economies, societies, and political difficulties, the pandemic reshapes the communities' social behaviors worldwide. However, the major challenge is the travel and tourism industry in the post COVID-19 world. The tourism industry is one of the significant contributors to the GDP of many tourist destinations globally. The tourism industry in the 21st century is anticipated to be a radical development of information and interaction tools. One such dramatic expression in establishing a tourist product is service in the hospitality industry, which is the beginning of an entirely innovative digital tourism path. Digital technologies are a vital and integral part of many businesses in the world. The tourism industry needed a significant change to build a more substantial impact on potential tourists, and technological advancement is the tourism industry's premium Future.

A catalyst for the explosion of the sharing economy

Travel is essentially about connecting people and places. Leveraging technology such as near-universal high-speed internet connectivity, search and geolocation technologies, mobile payments and social platforms, these connections have evolved and one industry-changing development has been the explosion of the sharing economy.

Zooming in on hyper-personalisation

One big advantage of digitalisation is the ability to harvest data and analytics. Consumers want to feel special and expect personalisation of service and experience. By capturing personal data from customers and learning more about their behavioural patterns, companies are increasingly optimising services across the customer journey.



Breaking boundaries and establishing bridges

In previous decades, North America and Europe have dominated the travel markets, but this may not be the case for much longer. By 2030, most of the growth in international travel will come from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, according to the World Economic Forum. China in particular is a major driver of growth in global tourism - a powerful factor in shifting usage of technology as the Chinese middle class travels farther to unexplored destinations.

Redefining destination marketing strategy

To stay relevant, destination marketing organisations (DMOs) need to change from a consumer model into a hosting model, from broadcast to engagement, and from marketing to managing the DMCs.

Mobile platforms and communication are the key: it allows to engage with a visitor through all stages of their experience, from awareness to interest to booking to visiting to post-visit. Digital social networks also allow word of mouth to reach exponentially larger audiences. This societal shift has turned content consumers into content producers, which makes the individual the foundation of any destination marketing strategy. According to TCI Research, 31 per cent of sharing economy users regularly share their travel experiences on the web, even outside their circle of friends and relatives.

In this fast growing world we all are looking unto to the every-one's sustainability.

Its great to be part of it, and being the change for the beautiful tomorrow.

We Osaka Group will be there at the forefront for the Revolution.

For the mother nature for the beautiful earth.

By Vineeth Venugopal

FROM THE GALLERY



Team Osaka



Congratulations for your New Roles & wishing you best for the new assignments



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