



OTM 2023 - the Biggest Ever Travel Trade Show in Asia Concludes on a High Note *Marks the beginning of an unprecedented year in travel*

OTM Mumbai held from 2 to 4 February 2023 at the Jio World Convention Centre (JWCC) ended on a high note, emerging as the biggest travel trade show in Asia post-pandemic. It was a clear testimony to the global travel business bouncing back with full vigour after the pandemic-related disruptions in the last couple of years.

The country's first travel trade show of this scale in 2023, OTM brought together 1250+ exhibitors from 50 countries and 30 Indian States/UTs. The 3-day show had a footfall of over 30,000 visitors from all over India, with serious buying intent. The show was spread over an area of 25,000 sqm at two levels of the world-class JWCC - by far one of the finest convention and exhibition venues globally. The energy on the OTM showfloor distinctly reflected the overwhelming attention and response that it received from all present, the global travel industry as well as the media.

Buyers thronged the exhibitors' pavilions - Tourism Boards and suppliers from Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, Bangkok, Cambodia, Fiji, Israel, Kenya, Korea, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Qatar, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and private players from many other countries were seen busy networking. Over the three days, the feedback was unanimous with quality and genuine business connections and great content displayed by exhibitors at OTM 2023. The ambience and exceptional experience within the new venue was also praised by all.

Domestic tourism has reached its all-time high, and as expected, the domestic pavilions were jam-packed all through the show days. The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, and State Tourism Boards from Assam, Bihar, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and private players from many other states received a staggering number of enquiries and conducted numerous fruitful meetings.

Dr. Abdulla Mausoom, Tourism Minister, Govt. of Maldives said, "Maldives values India and Indian tourists a lot. The number of tourists we receive from here is increasing with every passing year. And for this, OTM is extremely crucial for us as a promotional platform to showcase what else and what new Maldives has in offer for its Indian friends. OTM 2023 was huge, the new venue is fabulous." Talking about the high-quality buyers at the show, he added, "The quality of buyers this time was extraordinary and our stakeholders are very happy. I thank OTM for giving us this opportunity and wish you all the very best. I am sure OTM 2024 will be even bigger!"

Saudi Arabia participated in OTM 2023 as the Premium Partner Country with the intention of increasing awareness about Saudi as a unique, diverse, authentic tourism destination and ultimately, to drive visits from India, as it is one of the key priority source markets for the country. "India is a key source market for Saudi and over the past 18 months, we have both established and deepened relationships with key trade

partners, to inspire them about the breadth and depth of the country's offering and to reinforce our commitment to helping them grow their businesses," said Alhasan Aldabbagh, President – APAC, Saudi Tourism Authority. Talking about how important OTM is for Saudi, he added, "These engagements are critical in helping us achieve our ambitious goals, to drive volume and growth."

Thisum Jayasuriya, the Chairman of Sri Lanka Convention Bureau commented, "Sri Lanka couldn't have asked for a better stage to showcase itself. We were eagerly waiting for OTM 2023 and the show has not only matched up to our expectations, but also outdone itself! The three days of the show were high in spirit, filled with enthusiasm from everyone around and we had some great meetings, which I am sure will translate into huge business. Can't wait for the next OTM!"

OTM Forum hosted some extremely interesting and insightful sessions including a keynote presentation by the Saudi Tourism Authority. The panel discussion on the 'Key challenges and opportunities in emerging new world order post-pandemic and how the tourism boards are adapting to them' with speakers from Qatar Tourism, Azerbaijan Tourism Board and Tourism Fiji, was another such session that gathered a lot of interest from those present in the audience. Destination presentations by State Tourism Boards of Punjab, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand added to the bright & colourful program with a showcase of the best that India has to offer!

OTM Mumbai was the chosen platform for Skift to present its much-awaited 'Megatrends in Travel 2023'¹ for the first time ever in India.

The session on Film Tourism titled 'Bringing global destinations and locations to Indian cinema' saw a packed room full of film producers networking with high officials from tourism boards around the world.

There were sessions on topics of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Events) and Wedding Destinations being booming components of travel, organised by the Network of Indian MICE Agents (NIMA) and WeddingSutra respectively.

Turkey Tourism hosted an exclusive corporate networking afternoon for 35+ high-profile corporates in the exquisite setting of JWCC. H.E. Mr. Cüneyt Yavuzcan, Consul General of the Republic of Turkey in Mumbai, graced the event with his presence and attended presentations from Turkey Tourism and Turkish Airlines, followed by a networking session and high tea.

This annual edition was three times the size of the last OTM 'booster' edition in September 2022, and reiterated its place as the #1 travel trade show to promote destinations and products in India. It broke all previous records in terms of size and quality of travel shows in Asia.

OTM was organised by Fairfest Media Ltd., India's oldest and largest travel tradeshow organisers since 1989.

¹ <https://skift.com/megatrends-2023/>

“At this crucial time when there is an armed conflict and economic downturns in major parts of the world and when there is a huge gap left by the Chinese, the Indian travellers are much sought after due to their appetite to travel, within and outside India. OTM’s rise to the leading position in travel trade shows in the entire Asia and the Pacific regions is a testimony of all this.” said Sanjiv Agarwal, Chairman & CEO of Fairfest Media Ltd. (organisers of OTM). *“Opening of this world-class venue - the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai is another major factor that has helped the show achieve this milestone,”* he added.

2022 ended on a high note for India as pent-up demand, wider air connectivity and targeted marketing campaigns boosted their business. Overseas tourism boards have reported better-than-expected arrivals from India. With over 223,000 visitors till December 21, India emerged as the largest source market for the Maldives; it was ranked second in 2019.* As far as domestic tourism is concerned, airlines in India carried 123.2 million domestic passengers in 2022 against 83.8 million in the previous year. December clocked the highest traffic in a single month - 12.7 million passengers.** According to research by World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the travel & tourism sector’s contribution to the Indian economy would surpass the pre-pandemic levels in 2024 with an year-on-year growth of 20.7%.***

Ref:

*https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/outbound-travel-picks-up-india-remains-top-source-for-several-countries-123010100106_1.html

**<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/domestic-airlines-flew-123m-passengers-in-2022-dgca/articleshow/97148274.cms>

***<https://wttc.org/news-article/india-travel-and-tourism-could-surpass-pre-pandemic-levels-by-the-end-of-2022#:~:text=Over%20the%20next%20decade%2C%20India's,7.2%25%20of%20the%20total%20economy.>