

What
to expect in
2013

Roads Less Travelled

The Indian luxury traveller will be looking for experiential vacations in offbeat destinations

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SO, the world did not end, though the Mayan 'apocalypse' created a hot new destination in Mexico. In 2012, luxury travel — at least in India — remained fairly immune to recessionary trends and showed solid growth. An Accor study says that among Asia-Pac travellers, Indian luxury travellers spent an average of \$399 per night on hotel stays, second only to the Singaporeans (\$468). In 2013, a rise in multi-generation family travel, and personalised concierge services that cater to unusual requests, including custom-built tours around exotic themes, is likely.

High First and business class travel is going to be expensive, as capacity comes down. There has been talk



dian airports starting to think about private terminals. Airport ambience will continue to improve. Transit hubs such as Heathrow and Frankfurt now have smarter interiors, more choices in terms of food and beverages, and I anticipate other airports will emulate this.

Zero Gravity Pull Experiential vacations will continue to draw the high-end traveller: cycling through the south of France, hiring a Ferrari in Italy and gourmet culinary vacations. Indian luxe travellers could book seats on G-Force and experience the sensation of floating like an astronaut.

Destinations To Watch Offbeat destinations such as CIS countries are getting very positive reviews from high-end Indian traveller. Destinations such as Prague, Croatia will draw more Indian tourists. North Africa — especially Marrakesh — will remain popular.

Luxe Stays The high-end traveller does not want to be one of many and is seeking individual experiences, and that's where the boutique chains have an opportunity to shine with charming stays. We are also going to see a lot more of luxury hospitality chains checking into India.

Michelin In India This year, Michelin-star-rated restaurants, so missed in India, will finally start opening their doors here. We are opening one at our hotel, Dusit Dev. So let the forks fly.