

# Big bonus for travel

INDIA'S TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SECTOR HAS BEEN TRANSFORMING THE NATION INTO A GLOBAL HOTSPOT FOR TRAVELLERS SEEKING DIVERSE EXPERIENCES

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Life is right there, out in the open. Travelling to a distant land always brings one closer to oneself. And, in a country like India, considering the age-old history, rich culture, variety in ecology and terrains, a quest for adventure can never go wrong. It's diversified and unexplored landscape attracts an influx of tourists (locals and internationals) every year.

## THRIVING TOURISM

Tourism has always been paramount for the country's economy. Most prominently, it generates huge employment opportunity and has a multi-layer impact on the economy.

"There is a push for domestic travel. Today, previously unknown local destinations are being discovered and embraced. Hence, major cities are developing MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) facilities, further



enhancing their visibility," says Murlidhar Rao, chief operating officer, Araiya Palampur.

Today, hotels have changed the way they provide services to a more flexible model, capable of adapting to the needs of an ever-changing market. Moreover, the Ministry of Tourism spends a large chunk of its budget on the development of urban, suburban and rural infrastructure projects which fuels the Prime Minister's most ambitious 'Make in India' initiative.

In this manner, the tourism industry can reach out to far-off villages and local communities for new tourist hotspots. These developments in the tour-



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# Ring in the New Year with Style

WHETHER YOU ARE A TRENDSETTER OR PREFER TIMELESS CLASSICS, 2024 HAS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE IN THE WORLD OF FASHION



Aanchal Mathur  
@theinspirationist

As the countdown to 2024 begins, fashion enthusiasts eagerly anticipate the latest trends that will shape the year ahead. From cutting-edge designs to revamped classics, the world of fashion is set to undergo a transformation. Join us as we explore the latest fashion trends that will define the year ahead.

delve into the top New Year fashion trends that will dominate runways and wardrobes in 2024. Speaking about 2024's fashion game, Nikhil Mohr, chief design officer and co-founder, Maison Bharosa & Nikhil Says, "2024 is a year of dynamic fusion of traditional aesthetics and contemporary global influences. The year will be a celebration of an eclectic palette of designs. In terms of silhouettes, one can expect a harmonious blend of traditional and contemporary styles. Classic Indian drapes, like the saree, are reimagined with a modern twist, featuring innovative cuts and unconventional fabrics."

### SUSTAINABLE ELEGANCE

In 2024, sustainability takes center stage as fashion embraces eco-conscious choices. Designers are increasingly using recycled materials, upcycling vintage pieces, and adopting environmentally friendly production methods. From chic sustainable fabrics to cruelty-free accessories, the fashion industry is moving towards a more conscious and responsible future.

The intersection of fashion and technology continues to redefine style. Expect to see garments embedded with smart textiles, LED lights, and even interactive elements.

### RETRO RENAISSANCE

Nostalgia takes a front seat in 2024, with a revival of retro styles from various decades. Think '90s power suits, '80s shoulder pads, and '70s bohemian boogie. Designers are putting a modern twist on these classics, offering a fresh take on beloved fashion eras. Embracing the spirit of minimalism, Nikhil adds, "Something which would not quite work is over-accessorizing your look as the '80s and '90s would overpower the hues of the silhouettes."

### GENDER-FLUID FASHION

Breaking down traditional gender norms, 2024 will see an increase in gender-fluid fashion. Designers are creating inclusive collections that cater to all genders, encouraging self-expression and embracing individuality. Expect to see a blur of lines between traditionally defined men's and women's fashion.



PEK SINGH



In 2024, the intersection of fashion and technology will continue to redefine the style game

### DIGITAL FASHION DOMAINS

The rise of the metaverse and virtual fashion cannot be ignored in the New Year. Digital clothing, AR fashion experiences, and NFT-based fashion items are gaining momentum. Fashion lovers can now curate a unique digital wardrobe to showcase their style in virtual spaces. For Indian traditional and wedding wear, saree seems to be winning the game. Vanshika Gupta from Nestlé says, "Wedding themes across eras modern revival since it is a garment fit for queens, transcending time, embracing the results of heritage in every intricate pattern and vibrant hue." As we step into 2024, the fashion landscape promises a diverse and exciting array of trends. From sustainable ethics to the fusion of technology and style, the coming year offers fashion enthusiasts the opportunity to express and embrace their individuality.



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**THRIVING TOURISM**  
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enhancing their visibility," says Manjinder Rao, chief operating officer, Artha, Palampur.

Tourists, hotels have changed the way they provide services to a more flexible model, capable of adapting to the needs of an ever-changing market. Moreover, the Ministry of Tourism spends a large chunk of its budget on the development of urban, suburban and rural infrastructure projects which fuels the Prime Minister's most ambitious 'Make in India' initiative. In this regard, the tourism industry can pivot out to the rural villages and local communities for new tourist hotspots. These developments in the tour-

ism sector are expected to bring growth in the GDP of the country and propel the hospitality industry.

"The 'Make in India' initiative launched by the Indian government has significantly bolstered the travel and hospitality industry in the country. For the travel and hospitality sector, this translates to enhanced infrastructure, improved service quality and the promotion of India as a global tourist destination," says Manoj Lodha, MD, IRI, and head of hotels, Ikonis and international business, Ikonis.

Adding more, Sanjay Ghose, co-founder and CEO, ViewSouth, says, "India is a country that attracts millions of users into every year and it is considered one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. The 'Make in India' initiative not only provides economic growth but also positions the travel and tourism sector as a vital contributor, fostering

job creation and projecting India as a prime destination for global travellers in the next decade."

New tourist destinations and new business opportunities mean a generation of more employment. As per figures, the total employment opportunities generated in the country is expected to rise by two per cent per annum (2.2 million jobs) by 2027.

"With increased governmental support for local businesses, there's a rise in quality services and unique experiences. This helps in showcasing the diverse culture and heritage of India to the world. The industry gains from this by creating more jobs and revenue growth while offering travellers a richer, more authentic experience within the country."

In the next five to six years, with the onset of start-up businesses in travel and hospitality, India is expected to have a maximum number of self-employed youth in the country," says Shreyas Kulkarni, owner, Kings Resort.

"The travel industry is dynamic and is undergoing a transformative phase, adapting to changing consumer preferences and expectations. With this paradigm shift, emerges exciting opportunities for innovation, personalised experiences, and sustainable practices.

"As travellers seek unique and authentic experiences, the industry is poised not just to enhance but also shape these changes, creating a dynamic landscape for the future," says Pooja Shahri, co-founder, Chivva Asia Hospitality.

### HOSPITALITY BOOMS

"The hotel industry in India is on an upward trajectory. The increase in demand for hotel rooms in the country is due to a renaissance in sectors like information technology, tourism, retail, and real estate. "The hospitality sector has evolved

## Let good times roll!

In 2024, experts predict, travellers will be putting what's important to them first and centre of their plans, valuing deeper experiences that have a positive impact, time spent with loved ones and wellness moments that last well after checkout. Here are a few travel trends, shared by Vanshika Gupta, general manager, The Ober Hotel, likely to guide how we will see the world:

- Exploring different cuisines: In the upcoming year, travellers will be diving deep into the roots of food to find hidden culinary marvels.
- Sustainable travel: One of the most important issues in 2024 will be sustainable travel. Travelers today have adopted eco-friendly measures to maintain sustainability.
- Technology and travel, hand in hand: In the new year, we will see more travelers seeking tech-based experiences for their holidays and vacations.
- Experiential travel: Travellers now crave hands-on experiences and value moments that deeply connect them with the essence of a destination. Hence, this trend is expected to stay for a while.
- Minimal Travel: Minimal travel emphasizes mental well-being, incorporating elements such as meditation retreats, digital detox packages, and slow-travel programs.
- Cooking Experiences: This trend is specially designed for the families all around, in 2024, we will see travelers, choosing this experience instead of just dining in.

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2024

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digitally, leveraging technology like AI to redefine customer experiences. A-powered tools for faster processing, personalized, streamlined booking processes, and enhanced guest interactions. Moreover, advancements like AI-powered recommendation engines, predict customer trends, and add a personal touch to the travel experience," says Nikhil Chandra, director, The Ober Hotel, Prayagraj.

Elaborating more, "The travel and hospitality industry is undergoing a profound transformation, with Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities emerging as pivotal hubs for business and leisure opportunities. The heightened interest in these cities is attributed to a surge in business activities, which have acted as catalysts for industry growth," says Nikhil Sharma, market managing director, Curio, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts.

Travellers today crave unique and tailored experiences, leading to a surge in demand for personalized itineraries. This evolving landscape presents a wealth of opportunities, reflected in innovative industry growth models.

As the travel and hospitality sector expands its horizons, it's poised to thrive by meeting the evolving needs and desires of the modern traveler.

Vishal Prasad, director, Leisure Travel, Group, shares, "The digitalization of the travel and hospitality industry in India has been remarkable. Online booking platforms, digital marketing strategies, and technology solutions have become crucial for businesses,