

INDIAN TOURISTS EXPLORE NEW INTERNATIONAL DESTINATIONS



More and more Indian travelers now consider exploring new international destinations. A collaborative study conducted by Nielsen Company together with PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association) has shown that there is a great potential of significant increase in number of Indian tourists in the following years among Asian countries such as China, Indonesia and Maldives.

Several African countries are also now being visited by Indian tourists. **India's neighboring country, Bangladesh, is also constantly increasing its Indian tourist arrivals.**

Singapore used to be the top destination for Indian tourists. However, the number of Indian visitors has gradually declined since 2008. Indian business travels has dropped from 25% in 2008 down to 15% in 2010. Consequently, Indian leisure trips have also dropped from 32% down to 24% in 2008.

Malaysia ranks higher than Singapore as a top international destination for Indians when it comes to leisure travels. On the other hand, United Arab Emirates particularly Dubai is now on the first spot when it comes to business travels of Indian businessmen. Beside the Asian countries mentioned above, Japan and Sri Lanka have also recorded an increase of Indian tourist arrivals. Asian countries now account for 76% of Indian leisure travels and 63% of Indian business travels. **Conversely, European destinations have also shown slight increase in percentage of Indian leisure travels by 10% and business travels by 14%.**

Basically, there are three main reasons which drive more Indians to explore new destinations. The first reason is to visit their friends or relatives which accounts to 26%. The second reason is searching new entertainment activities which accounts to 18% and the third one is to enjoy the nature of the given destinations which represents 10%.

The study also showed that Indian tourists from progressive cities are typically those who can afford luxurious travels and business travels. However, Indian travelers from developing cities report that their travel is being financed by their relatives. Those tourists who financed their own travels pay more attention to planning of their travel trips. Due to limited budget, most of them depend on travel agents as their source of information.

Indian travelers are known to be frugal and their travel funds are seldom expanded. Generally, the travel cost remained stagnant since the year 2008. The study also showed that the average travel expenditures of an entire Indian family is just about \$3,663 USD.

The findings of the research revealed that the Thai Airways is so far the best airlines when it comes to service quality and customer satisfaction among Indians who make leisure travels. Jet Airways got the second spot followed by Malaysia Airlines. But when it comes to Indian business travels, Singapore Airlines remains at the top followed by Emirates Airlines of UAE and Malaysia Airlines.

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