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JAN/JUN 2014 - ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

# ENDLESS VACATION

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HAPPY JOURNEY



**HORN**

**BHARAT DARSHAN**

**PLEASE**

19 NEW DESTINATIONS  
35 NEW RESORTS

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As we enter our 40th year  
**RCI RUBY ANNIVERSARY**  
of offering you memorable holidays worldwide, we give you something spectacularly *desi* this summer. Unexplored destinations, untamed terrain and a lifetime of memories. Discover India. *Shubhyatra*.

# 2014 INDIAN SUMMER COLLECTION



**Rajasthan**  
Golden sands of time



**Kerala**  
Come close to your inner self



**Assam**  
Home to the magnificent one-horned rhino



**Sikkim**  
Sun-kissed peaks of white, gold and green...



**Himachal Pradesh**  
The land of the Gods



**West Bengal**  
Discover utopia over and over



**Puducherry**  
Delight in the grace of eras gone by



**Karnataka**  
Discover the land's sacred offerings



**Andamans**  
Where exquisite jewels and strings of glitter swathe you



**Tamil Nadu**  
Discover hidden treasures



**Ring in the new**  
New Resorts  
New Experiences

CELEBRATING  
**40**  
YEARS OF  
VACATIONS



# RCI Holidays: So simple. Just get going.

Fee Reckoner as on January 1, 2014.

## Standard Exchange

India		International		International	
Domestic	₹7,999	Short Haul	₹11,999	Long Haul	₹19,999
Online#	₹7,199	Online#	₹10,799	Online#	₹17,999

## Deposit Extension

3 months: ₹1,499 | 6 months: ₹2,999

## Deposit Combination

Transaction Fees: ₹2,999

## Trading Power Protection\*\*

Purchased within 30 days of confirmation - ₹1,966  
And 30+ days from confirmation - ₹3,933

## GetAway Special

Bonus Holiday fees vary according to destination, season, occupancy of the unit and the resort's RCI rating. To qualify for and avail a Bonus Holiday, ensure that a current or future week is banked with RCI

## Membership Renewal

3 years ₹11,999 | 5 years ₹15,999 | 10 years ₹23,999  
(refer page 47 for special offer)

## Guest Certificate^

Gifting a dream holiday to your loved ones is now easy and simple, all you need to do is call the RCI member helpline to know more

## Add-On Member Pack

You can get an additional RCI Membership Pack for your co-member, for a nominal fee. Check with the RCI helpline for more details

## CANCELLATION POLICY

**GetAway Special** If you cancel at least 61 days prior to the check-in date\*, you will be entitled to a refund of 70% of the fee | Cancellations made from 31 to 60 days before the check-in date\* will be entitled to a refund of 50% of the fee | There will be no refund in the case of cancellations made less than 31 days before the check-in date\*.

\*Check-in date as mentioned in your RCI Confirmation Voucher.

**Standard Exchange** In case you cancel at least 30 days before your check-in date\*, your Exchange Fee will be refunded after deducting a Cancellation Fee of ₹3,500 | There will be no refund if you make the cancellation less than 30 days before the check-in date\* | However, if you cancel at least 2 working days before the check-in date\*, your deposit week utilised can be used for future vacation confirmation, as long as it is within validity period, and your RCI membership has not expired | The trading power of your deposit will be recalculated from the date of cancellation, unless you have availed Trading Power Protection.

All fees/offers/benefits/promotions mentioned in this issue of Endless Vacation are subject to change without prior notice. Fees mentioned are inclusive of taxes, applicable as per government regulations. Call RCI member helpline for details and check for latest updates at the time of availing any service.

\*Visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com) to avail our special online fees. \*\*TPRO can be purchased up to 14 days prior to confirmed start dates. ^Terms & Conditions apply. Call the RCI helpline for details.

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**Website: [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)**

## EDITOR'S note

Namaskar!

Yes, RCI turns 40 this year. It was on February 4, 1974 that Christel and Jon DeHaan started RCI, which is today spread across six continents, in approximately 100 countries, with a network of more than 4,000 affiliated resorts.

You will be delighted to know that India, with over 130 resorts, now has a pride of place on the RCI world map. And what better Ruby Anniversary gift can we give you, than 35 brand new resorts right here in India.

In fact, in this Special Anniversary Edition of Endless Vacation, we unveil these new gems. To explore, experience this wonderful country, which many great minds have said, takes more than a lifetime to absorb.

So, you could begin from any corner of India. Because there is Himachal, that enchanting heaven in the Himalayan foothills; Kaziranga, the home of the Indian Rhino; West Bengal, home to more than Goddess Durga, Rasgulla and Hilsa; The Andamans, that beautiful bunch of islands that adorns the Bay of Bengal; Sikkim, that elusive little ruby in the mountains beckon you next; Rajasthan, where the sand dunes tell you stories of royalty, riches and battles; Karnataka, where you discover timeless traditions beyond the glitz of Silicon Valley; Puducherry sits pretty on the eastern shoreline, proud of its French heritage; Tamil Nadu shows you more than Ooty and Kodai; Kerala, because this long journey demands a holiday just to recover. So, where else, but in God's Own Country!

There are more reasons for you to celebrate this anniversary with us: you can look forward to exciting offers and new holiday experiences, and more excitement on our website [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com). And don't forget to register yourself on [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com) if you have not done so yet. Enough thrills for a lifetime – in a year.

I wish you a very happy new year with a lot of cheer, good health, happiness and many, many weeks of vacations with RCI.

Best Wishes & Bon Voyage!

*Pali Badwal*

Pali Badwal

*PS: Being a Special Anniversary Issue, you will find some of our regular features missing. Contributing members please note, selected letters, recipes and photographs will appear in the next issue.*

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# TAKING YOU PLACES FOR 40 YEARS



Founded in 1974, Resort Condominiums International (RCI) quickly became a driving force within the timeshare industry, and has been at the forefront of the holiday ownership industry ever since.

Today, RCI is the world's leading expert in exchange holidays. Part of Wyndham Worldwide, one of the largest hospitality companies across six continents with a premier portfolio of world-renowned brands, providing our global community of more than three million timeshare owners with quality holiday experiences.

Occasions are a great reason to get away and try something new. Anniversaries! Family reunions! Birthdays! Or just some time-out, make the most of our Ruby Anniversary to discover exciting new destinations. 4,000+ exotic resorts in approximately 100 countries across the world. And with 130+ resorts just in India... here's to more holidays together.



A holiday should rejuvenate our senses so that we can once again concentrate on our work. By meeting people from different parts of the world we can widen our thinking. RCI provides us this opportunity.

**Kuldeep Arora**  
Member since 2004



We have had endless and fabulous vacations with RCI, and with each year it gets better and better. We recommend RCI to many acquaintances and will continue to do so.

**Nimish Shah**  
Member since 2006

As RCI members, we have been on the move practically every quarter for the past three years. Since both of us are in our sixties, we will really treasure it in the years to come!

**Revathi & S.K.Bhasker**  
Members since 2004



We have always been very pleased with the remarkable experience delivered to us by RCI. All the trips arranged were truly gratifying. RCI really cares for customers and makes sure even their whimsical expectations come true. It has been really a privilege being associated with RCI.

**Baldev Yadav**  
Member since 2005



We are proud to be a part of this family... and once 35 years of our association get over, sure enough, our kids are going to take up another membership and we will still be there as grandparent customers, feeling good about having passed on a legacy - the legacy of togetherness!

**Geetika Goyal**  
Member since 1997



New Destinations > Todgarh | Jaisalmer

*On these golden sands of time, each shifting grain tells gallant tales of battles fought and kingdoms wrought in the name of honour and pride. Listen. And become part of a legend that **lives on.***

# rajasthan

royal legacy



Disperse the fatigue of a thousand woes, at this luxurious resort, amidst the romantic Aravalli mountains and their lush hills. This heritage-style resort gives you a taste of unhindered lavishness, integrating plush modern minimalism with chic Rajasthani artistry, complete with semi-precious stones and local marble.

**United 21**  
Todgarh



Soak in the ultimate royal experience of sand dunes and palaces, close to the charismatic Jaisalmer Fort, Bhatia Market and the grand vicinities of *Nathmalji-ki-Haveli* and *Patwon-ki-Haveli*. Enjoy in the luxury of your exclusively designed room, with the warmth of a fireplace and the cool views of the courtyard beyond.

**Club Mahindra**  
Jaisalmer



Across the western flank of India, a flash of brilliant gold undulates for miles into the clear blue of an equally shimmering horizon. Glittering with vibrant colours, vivacious culture and incredible Rajput lore, Rajasthan brings the overwhelming opulence of a past heritage into each living day, with generous grace and definitive dignity. A dreamland of unimaginable contrasts, this royal overload, stuns again, on the eastern side of the ancient Aravallis, with the green grandeur of lush forests and astonishing hilly escapes.

All you need to do, is dream. That you will live the dream, is an RCI word of honour.

Two hundred and fifty feet tall, the **Jaisalmer Fort**, lives on with a quarter of the old city's population still within its walls. The palace, the temples and quaint lanes packed with houses and handicraft shops, all stand as before, paved in stone. Beyond the fort walls, lie stunning views of the old city fading into the timeless desert. Enjoy the sunset views around the ramparts, under clear starry skies, to soak in the romance that exudes from this great land.



The 15<sup>th</sup> century reservoir that supplied water to all of Jaisalmer, was built just outside the city. It is now known as the **Gadsisar Lake** and is a must-see.



As far as the eye can see, **Jaisalmer** extends like an endless sheath of precious glimmer below, reflecting the intense sunshine radiating from above. A picture-book vision to behold, the rough aridness and wrinkled sandy spectacle we revere as the great Thar encases in its golden frame, a sand city of exquisite yore. The shocking hostility of a seemingly dead landscape breaks free at every oasis, fresh and brilliant, like a studded finger ring set in exotic colours, fine artistry and uplifting music and dance. Honour stands stoic in every account of daunting loyalty of its queens and proud valour of its kings. Rich traditions and culture carry into the present day, undeterred. And the magic! Take a camel ride or go on a desert safari to discover the enigma of old forts and older relics, the contrasts of terrain and tale, and the warmth of traditional hospitality and aromatic cuisine, to ensure that your journey along these dunes is nothing short of an imperial fantasy in a grand, grand past.





The nature trails of **Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary** are spread over 500 sq km of land with an enchanting mosaic of rivers, valleys, dense forests and sandy plains beyond. The wildlife sanctuary has a wonderful variety of birds and a healthy leopard and sloth bear population. Either embark on a sensational jungle safari or trek to your heart's content along these sensational mountain trails.

Historical **Dewair** is the blessed site where Maharana Pratap defeated Akbar. Draw from the power of the land and enjoy the views around.

As rich and lavish as the deserts on the west, is the eastern lushness of Todgarh. Historical and prettily pronged on the Aravallis, this divine hill station sits 3,281 ft above sea level. A retreat from the flurry of Ajmer, this little nook of nature was discovered by the famous historian Colonel James Tod, during the colonial era and was built into a village with Victorian edifices and all amenities of the time. The house in which he stayed for 20 years and wrote his renowned work, 'Annals and Antiquities of Rajputana' from, has since been converted into a Jain monument, Pragma Shikhar.

Within the Bhagora forest block, **Bheelberi Falls** cascade from a staggering height of 55 m. Ornithologists can feast their eyes on roosting long-billed vultures, while the rest can revel along rejuvenating mountain slopes.



The charms of the hilly Aravalli forests against the scenic backdrop of its ranges were once the hunting grounds of the British. These luxuriant forests are now a protected wildlife sanctuary, home to delightful birds and a thriving number of great cats. Camp along its refreshing trekking trails and lose yourself in the calm of ancient rivers and valleys of the oldest mountain ranges in the world.

Dazzle, with RCI 



**RCI has 17 affiliated resorts across Rajasthan.**

For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)  or refer page 25



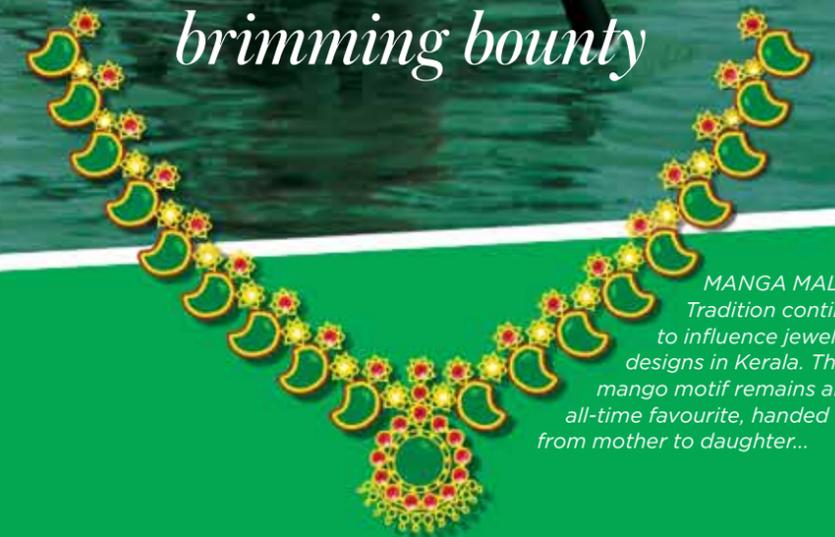
**MEENAKARI** (Page 8)  
With its mystic appeal, it graces not only the personality of the woman, but her soul too. The enamel art jewellery in gold and silver, comes in myriad colour combinations and designs. Precious and semi-precious stones give a contemporary elegance to these traditional masterpieces.



When we are close to our inner self nothing matters more. Everything works and the soul is at peace.

# Kerala

*brimming bounty*



**MANGA MALA**  
Tradition continues to influence jewellery designs in Kerala. The mango motif remains an all-time favourite, handed down from mother to daughter...

## Festival fervour

Kerala's eternal greenery, snakeboat races, beautifully ornamented elephants and captivating floats and boats enthrall the cultural spirit.

Rising up to 2,700 ft in the east, the lush Western Ghats descend, fortress-like, through an extravagant criss-cross of 44 rivers, into lavish plains embossed in the vivid contrasts of paddy and spice, swaying across enchanting backwaters speckled with charm. Beyond, a bezel of calm aquamarine, the vast Arabian Sea, lures a wanderlust that only grows deeper in the serenity of Kerala's distinct scenery, powerful art forms and exotic cuisine.

Discover your own mysticism, with RCI.





A cluster of little jewels in the heart of the rice bowl of Kerala, the Kuttanad region, is **Kumarakom**. Rich in its setting, its charm is further enhanced by the ethereal beauty of the Vembanad lake, the largest in the backwaters that off-set this fascinating village. Take a boat ride along the famed waterways and delve into the pastoral lives of its people, relish the gastronomic delights of their food and be enchanted by the richness of their unique culture. Ancient and mystic, Keralite festivities, martial arts and dance forms are matchless treats, not to be missed. Hailed as a must-do by the National Geographic Magazine, Kumarakom encapsulates the essence of a certain fulfilment, with rare panache.

Taking this magic into the realm of utter bliss, is **Poovar**, a natural wonder, where, rustic land holds by its fringes, the lithe poise of a lake, a river, a sea and its shore, in a balance so fine, even the Gods sigh in pride. The only route into this fishing village is via water, and even its name bears a fluid story. Marthanda Varma Maharaja, during his days of royal refuge, had described the Neyyar river as, *poo aar*, meaning 'stream of flowers', as he observed the vision of red Kovala flowers, paving the river like a necklace of crimson, across its emeraldine course down south. Enjoy a similar charisma along cruises into neighbouring villages and romance the arts or find new peace by the pristine beauty of its beach, where only gentle waves of the sea and the long calls of sea birds give you company. Surrounded by local flowers, countless spices and abundant coconut and banana groves, paradise does not get any better than this.

Dazzle, with RCI 

Once a rubber plantation, **Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary** is now a haven for birds like Indian fruit bats, purple moorhen, night herons, teals and egrets. Keep your camera on the ready.

The ancient town of **Kottayam** with its 700-year old churches are most famous for their paintings. More stunning art adorn the walls of Ettumanoor Siva Temple to the north. While there, also visit the fabled Thirunakkara Mahadeva Temple in the heart of town.

A few hours away is the capital city of **Thiruvananthapuram**. Pay a visit to its stunning temples, museums and beautiful zoological garden. The **Ponmudi** trekking trails by the Kallar river and lightly wooded slopes can be quite refreshing too.

**Kanyakumari**, at the southernmost tip of India, brings together the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. It is a day out, you will cherish for long.



Famous for its 17 km coastline in the form of a divine crescent, **Kovalam** came to be known during the hippie era. Chill out by the bistros and amble into **Shanghumugham Beach, Veli Tourist Park** and **Veli Aquarium**.

### The Grove Kumarakom

Ultra luxe, this resort sprawls over one and a half hectares of green and gorgeous landscapes that are typical to the region. Partially built on the lake, it has a private lagoon with its own inlet and jetty for mooring boats. Think picture post card, as you hop along wooden pathways and bridges that connect different parts of the resort.

### Club Mahindra Poovar

Let your heart speak and it shall be delivered. Luxurious cottages, private pool villas and the bliss of Ayurveda rooms spread over delightful gardens, make your stay as exotic as the holiday you dreamed of. In the lap of luxury, feel as pampered as you wish.

Mounted on Kerala's largest backwater lake, this resort sits elegantly amidst flowing gardens, chirping birds and traditional Kerala architecture, revealing through coconut fronds, the sheer beauty of Vembanad Lake. Wade into the pool and revel in the illusion of floating on the backwaters.

### Leisure Vacations Goldfield Lake Kumarakom

Azure skies stand like an everlasting umbrella over boundless stretches of deep green coconut palms, in the serenity of the backwaters that make Kerala what it is. At this stunning resort, breathe free.

### Club Mahindra Kumarakom



**RCI has 15 affiliated resorts across Kerala.** For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)  or refer page 25



New Destination > Kaziranga



**DHOLBIRI**

This glamorous drum-shaped gold pendant, is a traditional Assamese neck piece. Motabiri, worn by men is the larger version of the same jewel and is crafted without any gems.

*When a rare moment makes its acquaintance, it costs no more than a kindred spirit to capture it forever. Now, imagine an entire day, where every encounter becomes, truly priceless.*

# ASSAM

regal majesty

Image courtesy: Assam Tourism



### Rhino country

The flat grasslands of Kaziranga are home to some of the most exotic wildlife in the world. Rhino-spotting makes it that much more enticing.

Assam's *pièce de résistance*, its prized jewel, remains the Great Indian Rhinoceros. A show-stopper in the true sense, the one-horned rhino freely roams 430 sq km of diverse grasslands across Kaziranga National Park, in quiet dignity, flanked by the south bank of the mighty Brahmaputra on one side and densely forested hills on the other.

Robust as a raw diamond, this majestic creature had been mercilessly hunted down for its hide and horn for decades, until a protected area, northwest of Guwahati, was curated for its conservation a few decades ago. Over the last century and a quarter, this gentle beast has grown in number from 200 in 1904 to nearly 2000 at last count.

Kaziranga was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985 and today, its three ranges are home to more than 75% of the world's one-horned rhino population.

Full-bodied Assam tea is famous across the world for its quality and the plantations it comes from. Along a refreshing mountainous landscape, enchanting tea gardens sprawl green and luscious on both sides of the Brahmaputra. Set time aside for a leisurely visit.



The world's largest river island sparkles three hours away at **Majuli**. Vying for UNESCO World Heritage Site status, it is unique for its Hindu monasteries, dance and drama performances. For a memorable afternoon, visit Auniati Monastery, followed by a traditional Mising tribal lunch in a stilted bamboo hut, rounded off with a dance performance at Kamalabari Monastery.

While this stately beast is ample inspiration to millions of nature lovers the world over, Kaziranga's lushness lodges an impressive ensemble of other wildlife too. A host of birds including the crested serpent eagle, pelicans, Bengal floricans and black-necked storks; wild buffalo and boar, sambar; and the endangered barasingha, celebrated for its antlers, keep the enthusiast perked and shutterbugs zipping.

But the rhinoceros is not the only regal presence here. Safe from inhuman temptation, Kaziranga's thick forests boast of the highest density in tigers. With over 100 of them, averaging one per 5 km of sanctuary cover, guess who's really watching!

Dazzle, with RCI



**RCI introduces Kaziranga in Assam.**

For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com) or refer page 25

**United-21**  
Kaziranga



Book yourself a cottage for a vibrant, yet calming, holiday. Furnished with eco-friendly material, it offers comfortable accommodation and privacy. Located in the Kaziranga area in close proximity to the wildlife reserve, a UNESCO world heritage site, this dedicated wildlife and eco-tourism resort will ensure that you leave here with memories to last a lifetime.



New Destination > Jorethang

# Sikkim

*finished flawlessly*



Sun-kissed peaks of brilliant white, gold and green... The valleys alight high passions true; and in a trice, the spirit is free – **fire in ice!**



In the heart of the heavenly Himalayas, lies a mesmerising beauty, unblemished and rare. With crystal clear rivers gushing down steep icy slopes flanked by colours in all hues of topaz and green, Sikkim is a serene ode to creation.

Rich in culture, it has a calm and pervasive spiritual tone that homes a composed Buddhist sentimentality as gently as it fires the adventurous appetite for brave highland pursuits. All along, the Kanchenjunga watches over, magnificent, like a solitaire – fiery and inspiring, icy and calm.

With a stunning 360° panorama, **Chakung** is 45 minutes away from Baiguney. From 6,000 ft high, view the Rangeet valley on one side and Mt. Kanchenjunga on the other.

Here, the orients come together to enliven your body and soul. Head north and pump your muscle on treks and trails, fast river rafts and mountain biking or enjoy the melodic silences of wildlife sanctuaries.

The west adds an unruffled peace of monasteries and gurgling waterfalls while down south, rustic villages exude a quiet, refreshing candour that augments the colours of the east with flora and fauna, bringing you right into the middle of a fairytale.



**Club Mahindra Baiguney**  
Jorethang

For a natural high on river fronts, animal sounds and everything blissful, here is a perfect cut that you will cherish, until you return for more. Make it soon.

## Highland hues

With breathtaking views of mountain trails, engrossing vistas and mystic monasteries, Jorethang will invigorate your senses instantly.



Meanwhile, **Pelling** will leave you gasping, not as much for breath as for what the eye beholds. Minutes away, the Pemayangste Monastery and the ancient and rustic Sanga-Choling Monastery make your holiday well worth it. Sacred to Buddhists and Hindus, Khecheopalri Lake glimmers peacefully in the woods, calming every restive soul. Going up 1250 m above sea level, Kalimpong affords splendid mountain views with worthy detours to the Kali Temple, Tibetan Monastery and Dr Graham's home.

The mythical lores of PhurTsa Chu flow by the banks of river Rangeet. Meet the pilgrims and take a dip in the hot spring or soak in the legend of the holy caves where Guru Padhmasambhava slayed a demon. Make a wish at his 135 ft statue in Samdrupste.

On to **Jorethang**. At 1,700 ft above sea level, this bubbling town and gateway to Rinchonpong, sparkles with life in the January Maghey Mela. A definitive collage of local culture and village life, this is an experience that makes you ponder. Rejuvenate in the hot springs of healing and give into the powers of holy caves that alleviate your mind and body. On the same trail, the Akar Suspension Bridge and Sisney Temple leave you wanting little.

Dazzle, with RCI



**RCI has 4 affiliated resorts across Sikkim.**  
For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com) or refer page 25



*BLUE JADE (page 16)*  
Unique to the mountains, jewellery handcrafted with blue jade is truly traditional, yet fashionable. It has also become a modern trend statement.



Image courtesy: Ministry of Tourism (Govt of India)

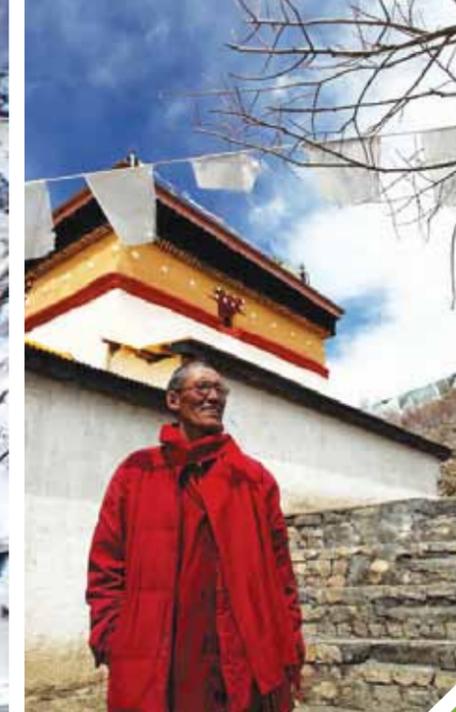


**Club Mahindra - The Destination**  
Kandaghat

Discover nature's luxury. Set in comfort, against a backdrop of lush forests and magnificent vistas where summer glowers with orchards in bloom, the rest of the year enralls with a lustre you need to see to believe.



*MANG TIKA (Facing Page)*  
Worn so that the pendant falls over the forehead, it makes the hair-parting look prominent and elegant. This traditional highland jewellery is essential to a married woman's jewel-box.



The world's highest cricket pitch, wildlife and numerous religious spots, enhance **Chail**, Patiala's old capital. Its lavish 19th century palace is now a luxury hotel.

Picturesque **Mashobra** peeps out of ancient deodars and plentiful flora and fauna. Come set for a rejuvenating trail, trekkers, and enjoy the sights of the many peaks above.

The highest peak is **Jakhoo Hill** with staggering views. Bow down to the power of Lord Hanuman watching from his temple at the summit.

Picnic time awaits at **The Glen**. Place your hamper amidst the thickly wooded ravine and hum to the gentle stream gurgling by.

The **Prospect Hill** panorama at 2,125 m is stunning. Topped off with the **Kamna Devi Temple**, this is a vision to behold.

Ski down scenic **Kufri** slopes that scale 2,501 m high. Don't miss the walk up the Mahasu peak.

*Step into a land adorned for the Gods and surrender to its eternal grace.*

# Himachal

*soulful splendour*

**Heavenly bliss**  
Encased in a garland of bounty, 4,667 ft above the sea, is the peaceful quiet of Kandaghat, Himachal Pradesh's pendant of 120 lush villages.

**P**ristine and pure, the Land of Gods drapes the great Himalayas like a sublime necklace of white snow-clad mountains upon its idyllic horizon. As if festooned for a reverent reception, in a stunning bouquet of nature's diverse colours, a stark trans-Himalayan desert, gives way to the delicate filigree of sprightly rivers and jade valleys blushing with ripe apples,

plums, peaches and apricots. And beyond, the verdant plains merge into nearby Punjab on one side and Haryana on the other. For a true mountain experience, chug along in the World Heritage toy train. Soak in the views of the **Kandaghat** countryside, breathe in the fresh air and listen to the winds as they whisper tales of the Maharaja of Patiala and his love interest.

The summer capital of the British, **Shimla**, has much to offer from views to historical sites. Stop at Scandal Point for some sparkling gossip.

His palace, the Chail View Palace, bounds in pomp and grandeur and is open to visitors with a romantic favour or historical keenness. Close enough, the ancient Siva temple fascinates both the religious and archaeological temperaments alike.

To capture the spectacle that is Himachal, **Fagu** stands framed in glorious apple orchards and forests. Go on and get a natural high.

More awaits in the Karol Ranges with deep caves, believed to have been dug by the Pandavas back in *dwāpar yuga*. Baba Thada Mulla, atop winding roads, overlooks a waterfall that drops to 250 ft. And while photographers flash lenses, the devout make wishes that promise to come true in a week.

Dazzle, with RCI 



**RCI has 14 affiliated resorts across Himachal Pradesh.** For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)  or refer page 24



New Destinations > Darjeeling | Lataguri | Falakata | Jhargram | Mandarmani

Awaken to a universe of unparalleled beauty, where the humble artisan surrenders to a higher power and simply recreates eternity in his own **divine mould**.

# WEST BENGAL

*custom-made*



**NOLOK**  
The very traditional nose ring, usually studded with precious stones, is a hassle-free accessory - a Bangla woman's mark of pride.



## Sterling Silver Oaks Darjeeling

Begin the day with the Kanchenjunga rising into the heavens across your window at this fairytale resort with a glowing backdrop of snow-clad peaks, miles of wild flowers and pine scented breeze to refresh you. Book your tea garden tours and look forward to a day full of exquisite Himalayan views with the dense fog for company every tea-time.



## Park Prime Lataguri



On the fringes of Gorumara National Forest Reserve and Park, splendid landscapes and quaint cottages assure you of a memorable holiday. The night safari and surrounding wilderness add to the thrill of being in the wild.

## Orbit, Kunjanagar Falakata

Thick lush green forests of Kunjanagar (Falakata), in the Cooch Behar district, is a perfect hideaway with well-equipped tree houses, jungle safaris, tribal dances and bonfires to make your escape into the wilderness, complete.



## MPS Greenfort Resort Jhargram



Spread over 500 acres, this eco-friendly property enthralls you with 35 natural water bodies, orchards and a special menu of farm-fresh, organic and herb-enriched dishes, zero pollution and fresh, clean air like you have never breathed before.

## Park Prime Mandarmani

Take an unusual beach holiday, another notch up with the discreet elegance of this retreat set across 100 acres, to enjoy the serenity of silver sands and blue seas. Let your hair down at its spectacular water park, cable car rides or the musical fountain that will get your foot tapping at sundown.





India launched its first organised trekking route a hundred years ago, along the Sangalila range. Mark your trail wisely. Then, chug along the narrow gauge tracks up the stimulating Himalayas in a delightful **Toy Train**. Even Mark Twain couldn't help himself after a ride along this jewel of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, a UNESCO listed World Heritage, when he said, 'It is the most enjoyable day I have spent on earth'.

30 km from Lataguri, the **Chapramari** forest connects the north-east with the rest of India. The spellbinding environs of the Tista river, greets you with the tranquillity of the famous Chapramari Sanctuary and its large elephant herds. Peaceful contentment is what infuses the Garumara Wildlife Sanctuary. 72 km from Siliguri, leopards join the ranks of exotic wildlife, best enjoyed from an elephant's back.



Image courtesy: Ministry of Tourism, (Govt of India)

**L**ike an ornate chandelier, 'sonar bangla', sparkles off the left ear of India, scintillating Bollywood with its music and resonating its brilliance in our revolutionary history and innumerable eras of academia. As for creative inspiration, you only need to open your soul to this cultural heartland of sea, field, mountain and their tribes, and the muses set to work. In all shades of ruby and pearl and different tints of fiery sapphire, the Bay of Bengal erupts into the labyrinthine Sunderbans, the world's most extensive and ancient mangroves, a UN World Heritage Site and home to the world's largest number of Royal Bengal tigers. The verdant Gangetic plains that roll out beyond the ebony trees, radiate with a deep artistic intensity before suddenly ascending into the mighty Himalayas.

With RCI, discover utopia over and over in this unique cache of unbridled treasure.



Handcrafted by a divine power, West Bengal tantalises the adventurer in you with **Jhargram's** thickets of sal, teak, mahua and peasal. This little town in West Medinipore district is a sylvan dreamland of scampering wildlife, rushing rivers and mesmeric mountains looming off their banks. Throw in a generous helping of tribal lifestyle, set in the serenity of temples and finish with the glitter of regal palaces, for your own glossy spectacle at the coffee table back home.

To the east of the district, on the northern end of the Bay of Bengal, is the silvery seaside drive-in retreat of **Mandarmani**. Little known to the rest of the world, its 13 km long beach is among the longest motorable beaches in India and entices you with small red crabs studding the sands like a magnificent cluster of thousands of little rubies. Stroll along these peaceful waters and soak in the sublime sunrises and sunsets for a truly rejuvenating break.

Back between the mountains and plains, the narrow strip of **Jalpaiguri**, evokes in its lushness, a sheer simplicity, much like the unassuming peridot it presents to the sentimental connoisseur. Bordered on the north by Bhutan, it is the door to the spiritual land of contentment and peace. Calm your mind and reconnect with that self which keeps you quietly grounded.

What better way than to complete your pilgrimage of nature, than with an obeisance to the Queen of hill stations, **Darjeeling**.

Glistening far away, like a golden pearl under the first light of the Sun, Kanchenjunga, king among snow-capped peaks, will stir your spirit, deep within. Just for a second, close your eyes and make a wish. Open them again, only to the narrow streets of the market place and the steep hill road ending in a flurry of traders among neighing tongas, a burst of vivacious red rhododendrons and white magnolias lining vast green slopes of tea bushes and splendid forests of silver fir against a wall of opalesque Himalayan woodlands. The clear blue of the sky above and the unfailing 3:00 pm fog that obscures everything for a surreal while, the rain that brings out a rainbow of umbrellas and then ... the soothing calm of a long leaf brew from the lush tea gardens all around will leave you in a trance.

Dazzle, with RCI 



**RCI has 7 affiliated resorts across West Bengal.**

For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)  or refer page 25



The sunrise at the summit of **Tiger Hill** above Ghoom, is an unimaginable theatrical delight. The first rays of the Sun shoot out from the east and fall directly onto the tip of the Kanchenjunga on the other side, illuminating it instantly, before rushing to shine on two peaks of the Himalayas right behind, revealing a breathtaking trident. Emerging thus, in the glorious red of the rising Sun, the mountains turn to pink, then orange and quickly to ochre, as dawn pirouettes, like a furious wave, far into the horizon. Look away for a second, and you will miss it! Look on, and this is a moment that will stand your hair on end, every time you try to describe it. Do set your alarm.

As the word suggests, the **Doors** are the grand gates to a heaven of sensational climes.

North Bengal, Sikkim, Bhutan and the north-eastern states lie in wait with dark natural forests streaked with fresh tea gardens and interlacing mountain rivers. Visit and be blessed.



**HIMACHAL PRADESH**

- MANALI**  
Club Mahindra Snowpeaks  
Manali Resorts  
Royal Banon Resorts  
Snowcrest Manor  
Sterling White Mist
- DHARAMSHALA**  
Club Mahindra Kangra Valley  
Sterling - The Sanctuary
- SHIMLA**  
Toshali Royal View  
East Bourne Resort  
Club Mahindra Whispering Pines  
Royal Himalayan Club  
Shimla Havens Resort
- KANDAGHAT**  
Club Mahindra - The Destination
- PARWANOO**  
Timber Trail Heights

**UTTARAKHAND**

- AULI**  
Clifftop Club
- KAUSANI**  
Krishna Mountview
- KANATAL**  
Club Mahindra
- MUSSOORIE**  
Avalon Mussoorie  
Hilltop at Avalon (Club Mahindra Associate)  
Hotel Green Castle  
Sterling Pine Hill
- CORBETT**  
United 21
- ALMORA**  
Club Mahindra Binsar Valley Resort
- RAMNAGAR**  
The Leisure Club  
The Riverview Retreat  
Club Mahindra Safari Resort  
Solluna Resort
- NAINITAL**  
The Naini Retreat
- NAUKUCHIATAL**  
Club Mahindra Dancing Waters
- BHIMTAL**  
Mountain Club  
Country Inn Bhimtal

**HARYANA**

- GURGAON**  
The Resort Country Club  
Ramada Gurgaon Central

**KARNATAKA**

- HAMPI/HOSPET**  
Vijayshree Heritage Village
- KARWAR**  
Sterling Emerald Bay
- COORG/VIRAJPET**  
Orange County Resort  
Club Mahindra Kodagu Valley  
Club Mahindra Virajpet  
Kadkani River Resort
- MYSORE**  
United 21
- BANDIPUR**  
The Country Club Wildlife Resort

**MAHARASHTRA**

- THANE**  
United 21
- MUMBAI**  
The Luxury Club at Le Royal Meridien  
VITS Mumbai
- LONAVALA**  
Treasure Island  
The Lagoon Resort  
Sterling Under The Over
- LAVASA**  
The Waterfront Shaw
- PUNE**  
Mantra Resort
- PANCHGANI**  
Summer Plaza Resort



**UTTAR PRADESH**

- AGRA**  
Jaypee Palace Hotels

**PUDUCHERRY**

- Club Mahindra Big Beach

**ODISHA**

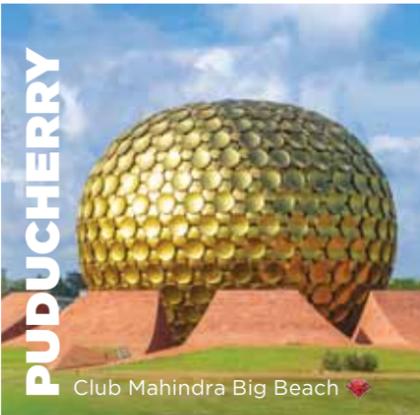
- PURI**  
Toshali Sands  
Sterling Golden Sands

**GUJARAT**

- GANDHINAGAR**  
Cambay Spa & Resorts
- AHMEDABAD**  
The Luxury Club at Le Meridien  
Starz Club & Spa
- GIR**  
Club Mahindra Safari Resort

**UNION TERRITORY OF DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI**

- SILVASSA**  
Ras Resorts, Silvassa



**SIKKIM**

- GANGTOK**  
Club Mahindra Royal Demazong  
Hotel Mayur  
Sterling Delisso Abode
- JORETHANG**  
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**ASSAM**

- KAZIRANGA**  
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The Tree House Resort  
Ratan Haveli
- PUSHKAR**  
Pushkar Fort  
Ananta Spa & Resorts
- JODHPUR**  
Ajit Bhawan  
Fort Chanwa Luni  
Desertscape  
Marugarh Resort
- JAISALMER**  
Club Mahindra, Jaisalmer
- TODGARH**  
United 21
- KUMBHALGARH**  
Club Mahindra Fort, Kumbhalgarh
- UDAIPUR**  
Club Mahindra, Udaipur  
United 21  
Cambay Spa & Resorts  
Aranyawas



**GOA**

- Averina Beach  
Club Mahindra Varca Beach  
Phoenix Park Inn  
Lotus Suites  
Royal Goan Beach Club Benaulim  
Royal Goan Beach Club Monterio  
Royal Goan Beach Club Haathi Mahal  
Royal Goan Beach Club Royal Palms  
Sun Village  
The Country Club De Goa  
Sterling Villagio Inn  
Palmarinha Resort & Suites  
Club Mahindra Emerald Palms  
Sterling Club Estadia

**ANDHRA PRADESH**

- HYDERABAD**  
Amrutha Castle

**MADHYA PRADESH**

- BANDHAVGARH**  
Bandhavgarh Meadows

**TAMIL NADU**

- YELAGIRI**  
Sterling MariGold Ridge
- YERCAUD**  
Sterling Rock Perch  
Lake Forest Yercaud (Club Mahindra Associate)  
Hotel Shevaroy's
- MASINAGUDI**  
Club Mahindra Masinagudi
- OOTY**  
Hill Country Resorts Lovedale  
Sterling Elk Hill  
Sterling Fern Hill  
Club Mahindra Derby Green  
Club Mahindra Danish Villa
- KODAIKANAL**  
Club Mahindra Coaker's Villa  
Hill Country Resorts  
Sterling Kodai - By The Lake
- RAMESWARAM**  
Daiwik Hotels

**ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS**

- PORT BLAIR**  
Park Prime, Port Blair

**WEST BENGAL**

- DARJEELING**  
Sterling Silver Oaks
- JALPAIGURI**  
Orbit, Kunjanagar, Falakata  
Park Prime, Lataguri
- KOLKATA**  
Vedic Village
- JHARGRAM**  
MPS Greenfort Resort
- RAICHAK**  
The Ffort Holiday Klub
- MANDARMANI**  
Park Prime, Mandarmani

**KANNUR**

- Kairali Heritage
- MUNNAR**  
Club Mahindra Lake View  
Sterling Terrace Greens  
The Tall Trees

**KOCHI**

- Club Mahindra Beach Resort - Cherai

**KUMARAKOM**

- Leisure Vacations Goldfield Lake  
The Grove  
Club Mahindra, Kumarakom

**THEKKADY**

- Club Mahindra Tusker Trails  
Sterling Woods n Spice

**ALLEPPEY**

- Panoramic Sea Resort

**KOLLAM**

- Club Mahindra Backwater Retreat  
Cambay Palm Lagoon

**KOVALAM**

- Country Spa Wellness Beach Resort

**POOVAR**

- Club Mahindra, Poovar



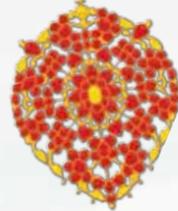
Newly Affiliated Resorts  
\*A unit of Rose Valley



*Delight in the nonchalant grace of eras gone by and saunter to the quickstep of a town that sets its own pace. Always, quaintly elegant.*

# PUDUCHERRY

*French classique*



### FRENCH BROOCH

*The antique French brooch is traditional and timeless at the same time. Studded with rubies, the brooch was a mark of poise and is bound to make a statement even today.*



## Enchanté!

There's a lot more to petite Pondy than just Aurobindo Ashram and low taxes. Luminous in its communal harmony, ethnic diversity and world-class trends, it sports a distinctly French flair. So, prepare to be suitably charmed.



Club Mahindra  
Big Beach  
Puducherry

Set the clocks back and recline in the spectacular comfort of the Big Beach Resort for the proverbial, 'gem of a holiday'. At the very least, you will be delighted.

**D**emure, like a pearl, this little wonder, iridescent in a well-wrought pavé of diverse cultures and influences, is set to truly amaze. But across its multiethnic tapestry, if something holds sway in this sea town, it is a certain *je ne sais quoi*, an X factor, that remains unmistakably, French.

With a tiny 492 sq km to call its own, huge contrasts make this an experience, unique to India! True to its name, Puducherry – meaning 'new town' in chaste Tamil – resonates with ancient Indian, old Dutch, Portuguese, British and French motifs that live on renewed and undeterred by fervent modernity. Backwaters and endless virgin beaches stretch into straight streets lined with heritage buildings, traditional palettes enjoy top-notch

A modern architectural jewel, the radiant globe of the Matrimandir, covered by golden plates that reflect sunlight on all sides, sits 30m tall on a foundation of 12 pedestals. The meditation hall inside has the largest optically-perfect glass globe in the world.

world cuisine and contemporary science fuses seamlessly with ageless spirituality.



Still remembered as Pondicherry, Puducherry's claim to world fame is the Aurobindo Ashram. What draws thousands of visitors every year is its unique synthesis of ancient yoga and modern science, established in 1926 by Sri Aurobindo and a lady everyone reveres as The Mother.

Leave the whizzing world behind for a quiet stroll down the tree-lined seashore boulevard for an instant essence of Pondy as bold bougainvillea burst forth open courtyards walled in pink, yellow and grey. The connoisseur will find fine lines in exquisite boutiques and antique furniture shops while the earthier eye will glimmer at high quality pottery, leather goods, paper

For those who find spiritual bliss in gourmet pursuits, there is no dearth for choice. Take your pick from a gamut of restaurants, serving French, Indian, Asian and Continental cuisine.

products and textiles. The colours come from the sea, so don some yourself. Sunbathe on the golden beaches and swim in the gentle slopes leading into calm blue waters.

And of course, there is **Auroville**. Adorned with the richness of many nationalities, people from all over the world live together as one universal community. They speak as many as 50 different languages and have national pavilions, each designed as a replica of their origins. True harmony, polished to perfection.

Dazzle, with RCI



**RCI introduces Puducherry.** For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com) or refer page 24





*A restive mind often finds comfort in time,  
when it comes with glorious days of sunshine and rain,  
open fields and wooded leans or even  
tales and travesties of kings and countryside.*

# Karnataka

gold standard



**W**hichever way you look at it, what radiates is quiet authority. Be it the sustained dignity of a royal stature or the sweet-smelling stretches of sugarcane, mounds of harvested grain or robust trims of tropical beverage, or even the impact of its technological predominance upon the modern world; this land of many hues, cradles the techno-centric dreams of millions across the globe as effortlessly as it provides welcome recourse from the very forces that tire it.

With RCI, enjoy what life should, really, be all about.

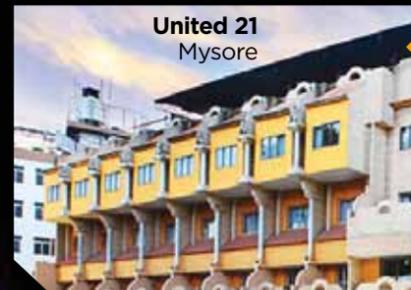
The Mysore Palace is a temple to art, engineering and secularism. Walk the ornate corridors of the official residence of the erstwhile Wodeyar monarchy, for a whiff of royal air.

Begin with the relaxed luxury of **Mysore**. Away from the cacophony of a zillion wants, the languid poise of this city introduces you to the sights, sounds and smells of contentment.

**Brindavan Gardens** with its botanical heritage, scintillating musical fountain and boat rides below the KRS dam, makes for a great picnic spot, during season.

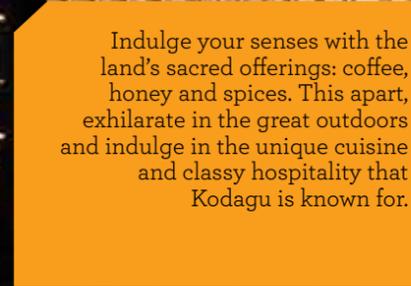
Its gardens and blossom-lined avenues, fragrances of sandalwood and jasmine and the Chamundi Hills that predominate the cityscape, lend a quite contrast to the bustling market place famous for its *Mysuru pakk* and lustrous silk. Pervading all this is the grandeur of a royal heritage that stands alone in its history of kings from ancient times to the modern day. Beyond the majesty of the Mysore Palace, from grand city gates to slim railings, elaborate arches and domes to intricate details on the smallest edifice, the city lives its royal yore.

The Chamundi Hills hold the essence of Mysore with its temple at 3,000 ft above and breathtaking views of the city, below.



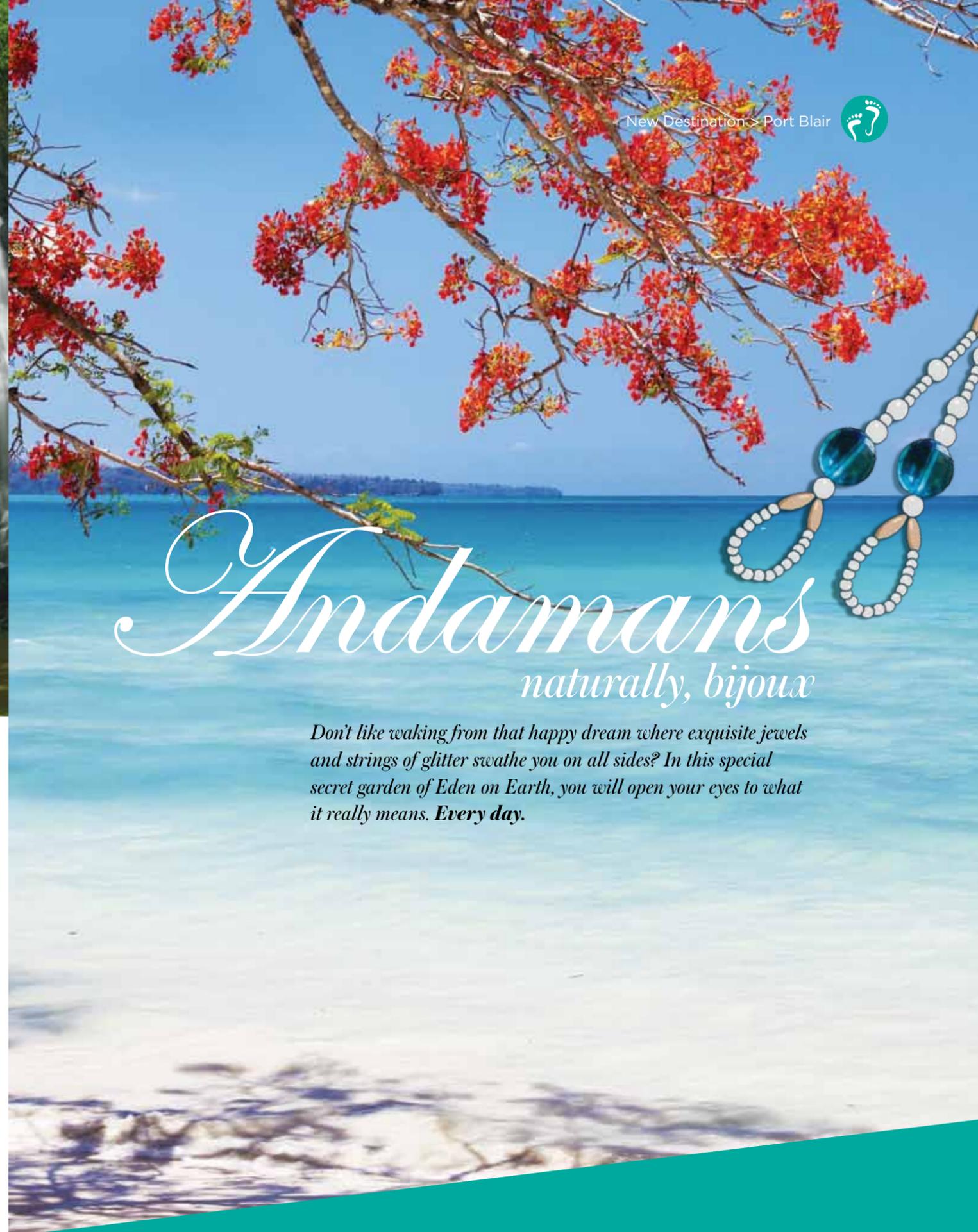
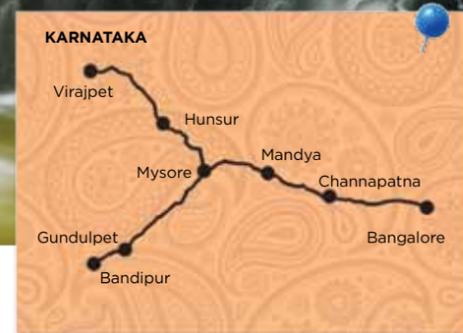
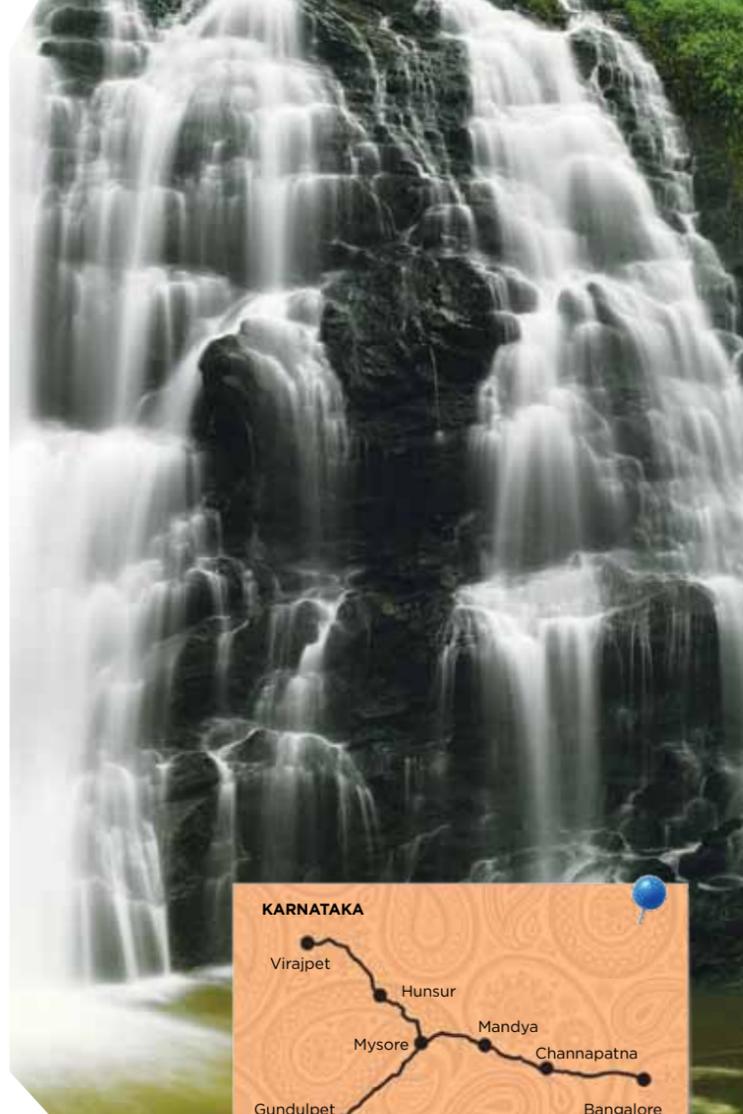
**United 21**  
Mysore

For a taste of true royal legacy, relax right opposite the Mysore Palace. Enjoy your days out but make sure that come 07:00 pm, you are either back in or on top of Chamundi Hills to see Mysore Palace, resplendent with 96,000 bulbs for just 3 minutes. Blink at your own risk.



**Club Mahindra**  
Virajpet

Indulge your senses with the land's sacred offerings: coffee, honey and spices. This apart, exhilarate in the great outdoors and indulge in the unique cuisine and classy hospitality that Kodagu is known for.



# Andamans

naturally, bijoux

*Don't like waking from that happy dream where exquisite jewels and strings of glitter swathe you on all sides? In this special secret garden of Eden on Earth, you will open your eyes to what it really means. Every day.*

The sublime **Chelvara Falls**, 15 km from the town will calm the frailest of nerves. Go with a picnic hamper, as **Chomakund**, just 2 km away, waits with lush and misty views. Further away, unusual in lore and open to the elements, the temple atop **Maleythirike Hill** presents magnificent sights of the valley beyond. And then there is the beautiful **Nalkad Palace**, refuge of Kodagu's last king. The views of Tadiyandamol and its swirling mists on the north side are most sensational. Start early and keep your trekking shoes on.

Driving south, suburban roads taper into winding skeins through the dewy slopes of Kodagu, into **Virajpet**, a poetic retreat for the weary. Walk through a cloud and let the crisp mountain air tingle you with new life.

If this does not leave you breathless, take in the rich bio-diversity that the Western Ghats unfold. Gilded with shimmering silver oaks, dense teak and rosewood forests guide rolling mists through emerald dales of coffee bushes between tall trees entwined with pepper vine. On the flatlands, golden paddy wave in approval.

Down mountain rivers and water falls, through thick woods and steep inclines and rare cuisine, every aspect of this wondrous countryside tumbles into each other in a divine dance of lore, life and lavishness.

Dazzle, with RCI 



**RCI has 8 affiliated resorts across Karnataka.**

For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)  or refer page 24



**KOKKETHATHI** (page 28)  
*This traditional Kodava pendant is embedded with rubies. A symbol of prosperity and vigour, this piece of gold-engraved jewellery is fringed on its rim, with mini fresh-water cluster pearls.*

#### BAREFOOT JEWEL

*These 'Rainforest Exotic' foot ornaments are hand-wrapped with wire to form a pendant out of lime green mother of pearl shells, lime coffee bean beads and various complimentary stones. Freshwater pearls add a special touch.*



**PARADISE REGAINED**

With 36 lush islands yet to be explored, an active volcano bubbling with life and swimming elephants to feast your eyes on, discover the extraordinary secrets of the Andaman and Nicobar islands, with RCI.



Nestle in tranquillity for a true fantasy island break. Studded with world-class amenities that you have come to expect from an RCI affiliated resort, the jewel in this crown is the fresh water swimming pool, the largest on the islands.

Image courtesy: Ministry of Tourism (Govt of India)

**E**mbellished with care in the southern Bay of Bengal, 582 islands come together as Andaman and Nicobar, pristine and white-sanded, precious as jewels, strewn across a broken string of lush tropical rainforests.

While the neatly palm-lined coast of the union territory's capital itself beckons for a few good days of nature camp, famous beach abandons and water sport, the azure vistas filter through in its turquoise glow, a technicolour razzamatazz of breathtaking beaches, red-toned corals, bright fish and a host of other vibrant marine fare.



For more soul stirring, the **Cellular Jail** of the 'sazaaye Kaala paani' fame, the British penal colony, stands as a stoic witness to the torturous, solitary confinements of Indian freedom fighters. The yesteryear jail is now a sanctuary for freedom lovers and has been declared as a National Memorial.

Exhilarate with water-skiing, sail boating, windsurfing, speed boating and whatever else fancies your muscle at the **Water Sports Complex**.

Inland, the city stuns the soul with its immaculate fascia and deep chronicles of native tribal life and political penitentiaries.

And if you always wished Mondays were Sunday, this is where it happens! As the rest of the Andamans shuts down for the day, make waves in **Radha Nagar** waters on **Havelock Island** or snorkel in the seas till the sunset romances you with its scenic

beauty on what has been touted as 'Asia's best beach'.

Inside the city, coconut fronds skirt the **Carbyns Cove Beach**, lulling you with a gentle breeze into sun and surf and lure you with the distant blue vistas of **Ross Island**. Higher up, **Mount Harriet** peaks as the perfect trekking trail. Pick your gear well.

Dazzle, with RCI 



**RCI introduces Port Blair in the Andamans.**

For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)  or refer page 25

The perfect island getaway awaits at **MGMN Park**, 29 km out to sea. Bejewelled with bounteous rainforests and mesmerising coral reefs, minute zoo planktons and large dolphins amidst many species of turtles and intermediate sea-life, this wondrous ecosystem is as balanced as it gets. Scuba dive or simply wade for your fair inheritance of other-worldly blitz.



*Finding the unfamiliar in the familiar and discovering hidden treasures where you think you've seen it all, comes as a blessing to most. To some, it is **welcome respite**.*

# TAMIL NADU

*southern souvenir*



**Daiwik Hotels**  
Rameswaram

India's first 4-star pilgrim hotel, Daiwik, brings to the pious sentiment, the luxury and comfort of a rejuvenating spa, a shopping arcade and a unique meditation room, to make for the most memorable trip.



**Sterling MariGold Ridge**  
Yelagiri

Modern and snug, this nook is set in the midst of untouched nature, to assure you of a quiet holiday that many pine for, but strangely, miss. So, blaze a new trail along the winding mountains and just rest.



**Club Mahindra**  
Masinagudi

Let this rustic resort cradle you by the brink of the Mudumalai forests. Enjoy the views, the natural variety and adventure trails, for a holiday you will come back for again and again.



Carrying on the magic of faith and temple architecture is the Ramanathaswamy Temple, whose third corridor is the longest built corridor in the world.

The land of extravagant paintings, divine dance, stunning architecture and ancient literature that lasts to this day, also comes with delightful revelations of a different nature. And while one's calming power will leave you feeling like a new person every day, the other's spiritual intensity will infuse new life into you, forever.

And RCI, brings you the most unusual breaks, where even the usual, is, well, exceptional.

Temple town, **Rameswaram**, stands marvellous and imposing, in the middle of the Gulf of Mannar,

The 17th century Rameswaram Temple, is significant to Hindus because they believe that Lord Ram built this temple for Lord Siva. Legend has it that the lingam in the temple is one of the 12 Jyothirlingas, most auspicious to the devout.

bridged to the Indian mainland by the Pamban Bridge, second longest in India, and shaped like a bow to allow maritime passage. Surrounded by coral reefs, this is the glorious place where Lord Ram is believed to have offered his gratitude to Lord Siva, on successfully rescuing Sita. The waters that washed away Ram's sins for killing Ravan and his entourage, have since, attracted millions of Hindu devotees in search of peace and redemption. For those of you who are more interested in culture and art,

the enigma besots most profoundly. Wade in the shallow waters of Olaikuda and its coral reefs, for a leisurely high with the sea gulls and flamingos, and stimulate your soul with Dhanushkodi's sublime sunsets.

A natural phenomenon, the Ram Sethu is a bridge made of rocks, mini islands, coral reefs and sandbanks, believed to have been built by Lord Ram, with the help of the monkey army of Lord Hanuman, to connect India to Sri Lanka, on their march to bring Sita back from captivity. The other belief takes us to Adam's legend, where Adam crossed this bridge to reach Adam's Peak in Sri Lanka. Hence, the name, Adam's Bridge.

Moving into cooler climes and far from the comforts of religion, four enchanting mountains hold new spiritual highs, 1,048 m above the sea, at **Yelagiri**. Hold your gut as you heave along the visual delights of 14 traditional villages studded along 14 hairpin bends coiling up the ghats, to the top of the hill. Each bend is named after Tamil luminaries like Paavendar, Bharathiyar and Tiruvalluvar among others, where the lucky seventh bend, unfurls magnificent views of mountain slopes and luxuriant green canopies that shield them from the elements. Naturally, trekkers revel in the luxury of thick forest trails and clement weather. And when they come down talking of delicious smells, think of flowers and fruits like fig, jackfruit,

At the base of **Swamimalai Hill**, reach out to the sky at 4,338 m above sea level. For lighter trekking, a 3 km trail leads to a small peak that throws open a sensational panorama of the valley below.

The Nature Park next to **Punganoor Lake** delights with its variety of plant species, typical to a rocky terrain. For a wonderful family day out, enjoy the artificial waterfalls and musical fountain that dances with many lights. Boating enthusiasts can head to **Nilavoor Lake**, surrounded by pretty gardens on its banks. Don't miss the **Thambiran Lotus Pond** in Nilavoor village.

star fruit, blackberry, cashew nut and the local delight, *panmeer pazham*. Their abundance also ensures that Tamil Nadu's best honey is available close at hand, with bees busy at work in the luscious wild and well-tended home farms across the region.



For more game and green, head to the foothills of the Nilgiris bordering the Mudumalai forests, and de-stress among the wild and wonderful of **Masinagudi**. Trek till sundown and breathe in the freshness of virgin

**Pykara** and its stunning beauty along the river, Toda settlements, dams and protected Shola forests introduce you to an indigenous culture from close quarters.

forests streaked with lilted streams and an abundance of wildlife. A sudden elevation of 3,200 ft brings in a large assortment of flora and 320 different species of exotic birds, making it rather difficult for ornithologists and botanists to leave. As for the simple nature lover, the climb that begins with

bamboo groves, routes through dense deciduous forests, making way for charming tea plantations – a perfect end to a perfect day.

Dazzle, with RCI 



**RCI has 14 affiliated resorts across Tamil Nadu.**

For details visit [www.rci.com](http://www.rci.com)  or refer page 25



**JHIMKI** (Page 34)

Also known as Jhumki or Jhumka is a bell-shaped jewel, set in precious stones, usually diamonds or rubies, with pearls hanging at the bottom. The lotus shaped earrings that the jhimkis hang down from are most traditional.



**Theppakadu Elephant Camp** gives the most exhilarating pachyderm experience while the **Wildlife Museum**, brings you face to face with past residents of Mudumalai. Gudalur and viewpoints across unexplored forest trails leave you rejuvenated.





# दोहराते हुए बनो रहे हैं जोते लगे हैं

## The Spirit of India, now in 35 Brand New Resorts

**Himachal Pradesh** - Shimla | Kandaghat

**Uttarakhand** - Ramnagar | Mussoorie  
Corbett

**Rajasthan** - Udaipur\* | Todgarh | Jaisalmer

**West Bengal** - Jhargram | Lataguri  
Falakata | Darjeeling | Mandarmani

**Assam** - Kaziranga

**Sikkim** - Jorethang

**Odisha** - Puri

**Madhya Pradesh** - Bandhavgarh

**Goa** - Varca

**Karnataka** - Mysore | Virajpet

**Maharashtra** - Thane | Lonavala

**Tamil Nadu** - Rameswaram | Yelagiri  
Masinagudi | Ooty | Kodaikanal

**Kerala** - Kumarakom\* | Poovar | Kochi

**Andamans** - Port Blair

**Puducherry**

\*Two new resorts added in Udaipur  
\*Three new resorts added in Kumarakom



Shimla is famous for its scenic beauty and delicious apples. It is the apple heartland of Himachal. Today it continues to be one of the most intensive apple growing areas in the country.

### SHIMLA SHIMLA HAVENS RESORT

Situated at an altitude of 6,400 feet in the Himalayas, this newly built resort is spread across 6 acres surrounded by cedar, pine and rhododendron forests. This resort is located 4 km from ISBT and 1 km from Summer Hill Railway station. The distance from city centre to the resort is about 7 km. The resort has well appointed rooms with banquets, two restaurants (The Deck & Cedar), bar (Stimulus). Ground floor units come with personal garden space and every unit has a valley view. Gym, indoor and outdoor guest facilities, adventure sports like rock climbing, rappelling, zip line, valley crossing, badminton, basketball, etc. are in place.

### MADHYA PRADESH BANDHAVGARH MEADOWS

The resort is an ideal refuge for those in quest of exciting tiger safaris and a stay in tranquil environs in full luxury. Bandhavgarh Meadows promises just that! The resort is spread across natural surroundings that are typical of wildlife lodges with picturesque settings.

Bandhavgarh Meadows is spread in acres of land in Bijaria Village, surrounded by sal forest hills on all sides. A setting which makes you feel that you are camping out in the jungle itself with full security and comfort.

Discover wonders of nature while staying at Bandhavgarh Meadows in company of an in-house naturalist guide and the warmth of rejuvenating fire logs.



Bhopali Paan is an integral part of the Culture of Bhopal and a Paan shop can be found at every nook and corner of the city of Bhopal. The Bhopali Paan comes with various kinds of toppings which includes chuna, kattha and supari. It has digestive values and is often offered to guests after a hearty meal.



**MEMBER  
SPEAK**

*We never miss an opportunity to holiday with RCL.*  
Prashant Majumdar  
Member since 2004



## KOCHI

### CLUB MAHINDRA BEACH RESORT - CHERAI

With the beach on one side and the backwaters on the other, you'll be spoilt for choice at Club Mahindra Cherai Beach. Enjoy a wealth of beauty around you with a quiet stroll around or take a bike out for a ride. Pedal your way to the Chinese fishing nets and later relax with a soothing Ayurvedic massage or a slow cruise down the backwaters.

Your Cherai holiday promises to be simply amazing. Fringed with numerous palm trees and coconut groves, Club Mahindra Cherai Beach makes for a wonderful stay.

Almost every dish prepared in Kerala has coconut and spices to flavour the local cuisine giving it sharp pungency that is heightened with the use of tamarind, while coconut gives it its richness, absorbing some of the tongue-teasing, pepper-hot flavours.



## GOA

### CLUB MAHINDRA EMERALD PALMS

At Club Mahindra Emerald Palms, you have no choice but to slow down and catch your breath. Imagine long days filled with innumerable snoozes in a hammock or under a beach umbrella, exciting water sports and sampling delicious cuisine. A lazy getaway, Goa offers more than just beaches or water sports. Unhurried by the passage of time, it's a door to explore ancient churches, forts and villages and experience the Goan culture at its very best. Come unwind at one of the world's favourite beach destinations. A sprawling Portuguese villa, Club Mahindra Emerald Palms brings you the very best of Goan hospitality at the resort.

Goan cuisine is mostly sea-food-based, staple being rice and sea-food. It has a lot of Portuguese influences. Featured here is Goan prawn-curry, a popular delicacy.



**MEMBER  
SPEAK**



*Thanks RCI once more for the experience.*  
Atul Kumar P Mehta  
Member since 2011



## KODAIKANAL

### CLUB MAHINDRA COAKER'S VILLA

With wonder to be experienced at every turn, Club Mahindra Kodaikanal promises to leave you absolutely mesmerised. Be prepared to have your heart stolen by the beauty of the sprawling hills and the sheer beauty of the Kodai Lake. Your stay here is going to be one memorable holiday. Club Mahindra Kodaikanal is located at the immensely popular Coaker's Walk and offers sweeping views of the plains below. Warm and informal, the resort offers plenty of opportunities to have fun with your loved ones. An ideal place to lounge around, it is the perfect setting to take advantage of the amazing mountain breeze.

Kodai is a blessing for cheese lovers. Edam, Gouda, Havarti, Provolone, Camembert, Feta and many more are all produced in this South Indian highland! In fact, cheese from here is exported to various countries around the globe.



## OOTY

### CLUB MAHINDRA DANISH VILLA

Nestled in The Nilgiris or Blue Mountains - Ooty, the capital of the Nilgiri district, is often called the 'Queen of hill stations'. Situated at an altitude of 2,240 meters above sea level, this picturesque hill station attracts tourists from all corners of the world, throughout the year. It is in this beautiful spot that Club Mahindra Danish Villa is located. From river crossings to night safaris, the all round jaw-dropping beauty to the luxurious comforts of the resort itself promises to be one amazing holiday. Club Mahindra Danish Villa is contemporary in style. The rooms are extremely comfortable with earthy furnishings and breathtaking views.



Ooty is a chocoholic's paradise. Walk into any decent store or bakery, and walk away with some white chocolate, a slab of strawberry chocolate, a dollop of bitter chocolate or a crunchy nut and fruit chocolate. No trip to this hill station is complete without a round of chocolate shopping.



**MEMBER  
SPEAK**



*We look forward to many more holidays with RCI.*  
Gayathri Hullur  
Member since 2005



## UDAIPUR

### CLUB MAHINDRA UDAIPUR

Paras Hill Resort, Udaipur. A place where old world charm meets contemporary comfort. Don a pagdi and learn the perfect way to say 'Ghani Khamma' from our staff. Or take a peek at rich Rajasthani heritage at the Crystal Palace. Hop on a mini train that glides through Gulab Bagh and relive your childhood. Even a stroll through the winding colourful streets is an adventure by itself.



A true Rajasthani delicacy - dal-baati-churma. It consists of baatis or flaky round breads baked over firewood and served dipped in ghee. This is accompanied with panchmel and churma.

## CORBETT

### UNITED-21

Famous for its beautiful location at the foothills of the Himalayas, Corbett is also well-known for its wildlife. To experience nature in its truest state, you ought to visit the incredible United-21 Wildlife Resort. Bird watching, elephant safari, canter safari and many more activities can be enjoyed at this exquisite wildlife resort. The facilities at the resort include a multi cuisine restaurant, the remarkable service by the resort staff and breath-taking views of nature. Your holiday experience will be a truly unforgettable one!



Bal Mithai is a brown chocolate-like fudge, made with roasted khoya, coated with white sugar balls, and is a popular sweet from Uttarakhand.

**MEMBER  
SPEAK**



*Thank RCI for the wonderful experiences!*

Shakib Raiba  
Member since 2001



Vada pav, also known as the Indian burger is a spicy fast food dish popular in Mumbai. It consists of a batata vada sandwiched between two slices of pav. Vada pav is served with a chutney, which is made from shredded coconut, tamarind pulp and garlic.

## UDAIPUR

### UNITED-21

Udaipur, also called the 'Venice of the East' is one of India's truly seductive cities. The Lake Palace located in the middle of Pichola Lake has architectural and cultural marvel. Lined with palaces, havelis and temples at every turn, Udaipur is a fascinating sight. Situated right opposite to the Udaipur International Airport, the United-21 Lake City Resort hosts you like a Maharaja in a traditional Indian Mahal. The resort offers a bell desk and porter service, a multi-cuisine restaurant. Get captivated by the vast array of culture, heritage, architecture and cuisine at this marvellous destination called Udaipur.



Makki-di-roti - This tasty bread is Rajasthani in origin and goes well with almost any vegetarian or non-vegetarian dish. Tastes well with curries as it is perfect for 'mopping up' the gravy! Best when accompanied with Sarson ka saag.

**MEMBER  
SPEAK**



*Thank you RCI for such a wonderful time!*

Abhijit Sengupta  
Member since 2008



## RAMNAGAR SOLLUNA RESORT

Just a six hour drive from New Delhi, at the foothills of the Himalayas, near the Jim Corbett National Park. Solluna Resort is spread over 25 acres along the banks of the Ramganga river. Nestled in the protected reserve forest of the National Park, the resort offers opportunities to revel in nature, with an array of adventurous activities.

Solluna Resort with its eco-friendly settings perfectly bring alive the essence of nature in its interiors. The theme of the resort revolves around wildlife and is pleasant during summer.



Uttarakhand is famous for its wide range of pulses. Bhatt or black soybean is an all-time favourite with the locals. Rich in proteins and iron, Bhatt is traditionally prepared in an iron kadhai to make chudkani, bhatwani and thatwani.



## PURI STERLING GOLDEN SANDS

Located at the scenic spot where Bhargavi river meets the sea, Sterling Holiday Resort at Puri is the ideal place to start your spiritual sojourn in this temple town. Located in Sipasarubali village, Baliapanda, the resort stands right next to the Brahma Kumari Ashram, offering the perfect setting for you to unwind as you prepare to seek the blessings of the Almighty Lord Jagannath. A visit to a holy city leaves a sense of satisfaction. A wonderful stay only adds to the spiritual experience. Sterling Golden Sands promises just that.

Located along the beach, the resort not only offers a wonderful home away from home, but also stunning views of the Bay of Bengal as well as the Jagannath Temple.



Chenna pada (baked cottage cheese) is a sweet dish from Odisha. Usually made during festivals and as offerings to the Gods. It is said that Chenna Poda is Lord Jagannath's favourite dessert.

### MEMBER SPEAK



*Hope in the coming years we break our own record through RCI.*  
Anamika Das Gupta  
Member since 1995



## MUSSOORIE STERLING PINE HILL

Sterling Pine Hill is set in majestic Mussoorie. It is a perfect setting to enjoy a quiet time away from the city chaos. The modern amenities and the beautiful natural surrounding ensure a comfortable stay for all its guests. Located 2.5 km from Mussoorie town, this patch of hillside land is combed by 300 steps that connect various parts of the 5-acre resort.

Set in a prime location of Mussoorie, Sterling Holidays Pine Hill puts everything the city has to offer just outside your doorstep. Nestled amidst the beautiful surroundings of Mussoorie - this popular hill station offers comfortable accommodation to travellers. This resort overlooks the Doon Valley.

Momo has become a traditional delicacy in most parts of northern and eastern India. Momo is a type of steamed bun with fillings. There are two types of momos, fried and steamed. Momo are usually served with a dipping sauce consisting of tomatoes as the base ingredient.



## LONAVALA STERLING UNDER THE OVER

Once a mountain hideout for the Marathas who built forts and used the mountainous terrain for guerrilla warfare against the Mughals and the British, Lonavala today is the ultimate weekend hill-station getaway for most residents of Mumbai and Pune. Take a minor detour off the Mumbai-Pune expressway and you will find yourself in the arms of nature's abundant charm! The green expanse will cool your eyes and you will feel yourself sink into a state of calmness in no time.

Whether you want to go trekking or camping or just want to spend your evening relaxing in your room - Under The Over is the perfect setting for you and your family.



It was Shri Maganlal Agarwal who introduced Chikki to Lonavala more than 125 years ago. Shri Maganlal began selling 'gurdana', a mixture of jaggery and groundnuts in a sack to the labourers who were laying tracks. 'Gurdana' is rich in protein and iron and the labourers used to consume it for the instant energy. Later, the simple 'gurdana' progressed to the groundnut chikki.



### MEMBER SPEAK



*The resorts booked through RCI are super luxurious and comfortable.*  
Virendra M Chandalia  
Member since 1996



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### THE ROYAL GOAN BEACH CLUB AT ROYAL PALMS

An all new refurbished Royal Goan Beach Club at Royal Palms welcomes you to a whole new holiday experience. Designed and landscaped in a colonial style with attractive facades, balconies and lovely gardens that feature tall palm trees, this resort is situated close to Benaulim beach. It offers a range of plush studios, one and two bedroom apartments on different floors. Luxury, exclusivity and action-packed family holiday all rolled in one.

Sun, sand and the beach awaits you!

GOA	SHIMLA
Royal Goan Beach Club - Royal Palms	Royal Himalayan Club
Royal Goan Beach Club - Benaulim	
Royal Goan Beach Club - Monterio	JAIPUR
Royal Goan Beach Club - Haathi Mahal	Ratan Haveli



ROYAL MONTERIO - GOA



ROYAL HIMALAYAN CLUB - SHIMLA



RATAN HAVELI - JAIPUR

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