



Ratna Chadha
Chief Executive
TIRUN Travel Marketing

With travel emerging as a leading option among MICE groups, the Indian incentive travel market is growing and seeking new outlets and cruising is increasingly seen as a fresh, novel

Business on Cruise

For incentive activities, cruising offers highest satisfaction as well as incredible value. Unlike land-based incentives, cruises are all-inclusive with few out-of-pocket extras. With Indian MICE market becoming more and more sophisticated and evolving in its preferences and interests, we find out how it has warmed up to the idea of cruise for MICE.

way to motivate staff and reward customers. Over the years, TIRUN Travel Marketing has conducted several MICE activities for companies across different sectors like cement, paints, home appliances, electronics, auto, financial, pharma, rice, lights, designer watches and jewellery, insurance and more. A full ship charter is the ultimate in privacy, exclusivity and customisation. MICE groups are now increasingly considering longer sailings. Earlier, such customers would mostly look at two-three night getaways but they are now embarking on long haul sailings that cover destinations like Europe, the Bahamas and Alaska.



Zia Hajebehoy
Director
Aquasail

People are adding sailing to weddings, conferences and off sites. Currently MICE groups look for safety, large numbers, customised formats and engagement in a unique manner. Aquasail provides this through sailing as we have 80 boats, seven varieties – ranging from two-man kayaks to sailing cruising yachts of about 15 persons. We are able

to handle large groups by taking out multiple boats at one time. We offer products that appeal to different profiles for example: Beach Fiestas – ideal for sales teams, dealer incentives, employee reward, 'sailebrating' events (weddings, special occasions etc); Regattas – good for HNI clients and stake holders, leadership and senior management; Cruising extravaganzas & Flotillas – great for networking, smaller groups, bonding. We cater to MICE groups by educating them on what can be done.

Cruise companies who sail around the world and cater to diverse segments of clientele – are looking at India as a market with immense potential. Cruises with their range of price points offer value across a variety of MICE Tiers from budget to super deluxe. Gala events and team bonding activity can be personalised down to an art with the help from the Cruise Director of Entertainment and his Teams and this is a big plus point. Cruise Tourism is finding a strong uptake Y-O-Y and at Thomas Cook India we are witnessing an impressive growth rate of over 35 per cent for our cruise segment. While the cruise market internationally was traditionally the domain of the seniors TG, our India data indicates a vibrant diversity in demand- right from our youthful Gen Y, women only groups, honeymooners, family and ad hoc groups of family and friends to our corporate executives and MICE.



Shibani Phadkar
Senior Vice President
Products & Operations
Leisure Travel (Outbound)
Thomas Cook (India)

did you know?

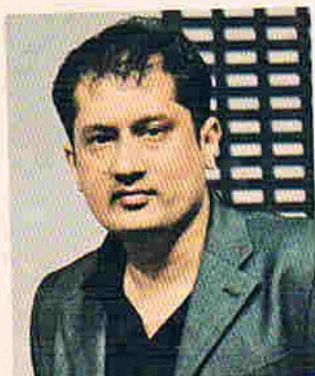
- There are more than 300 sea-going cruise ships in the world. They can collectively accommodate over 300,000 passengers per day
- The latest super-sized ships carry over 4,000 people (counting passengers and crew). They would dwarf the Titanic and are as tall as a sixteen-story building
- A record 20 million-plus global passengers went on a cruise in 2012
- According to the 2014 North American Cruise Market Profile Survey cruise travellers rank an ocean cruise as the best overall vacation experience
- There are over 2000 ports of call around our planet that cruise ships can visit
- Caribbean is the most popular cruising destination in the world with almost every cruise line operator

India has shown remarkable acceptance to cruise vacations. Yachting as a category too is a growing segment with the discerning traveller who is looking for unique luxury travel holiday options. Corporates, in India are open to looking at sophisticated and unique holiday experiences and are not afraid to dig deeper in their pocket provided they see a value for what they are paying for. We are positive that SeaDream's exquisite offerings will appeal to the Indian Corporate. For offering as an incentive travel to premium clients or personal holiday options of the top management.

The idea of yachting vacations is being appreciated by corporates, as the journey on board a ship that is not only pleasurable, studded with state of the art facilities, lavish cuisine and recreational facilities, but is also comparatively free from sea travel health hazards. Given SeaDream's five-star hospitality service, at sea and luxury experience, corporates are receptive to exploring yachting holiday options to offer as an incentive to premium clients.



Gitanjali Balani
Director
In Rhythm



Kiran Bhandari
Co-founder
Cruise Club Vacations

The state-of-the-art facilities with amazing new ships, logistical convenience of cruise where-in you travel to multiple locations without needing to check-in and checkout every few days, and the value for money proposition that cruising offers is making cruising an increasingly sought after choice for the Meetings & Incentives (M&I) segment. Traditionally, cruising brought novelty value to the guests and short two and three-night cruises from Singapore were the preferred options for M&I. However, Indian M&I planners are now venturing to further shores like Bahamas, Greek Islands and Western Mediterranean. At the same time, they are looking for newer ships. The Norwegian Epic, for example, with its plethora of entertainment options, and with Indian food onboard has been particularly popular from Barcelona. Another interesting trend is that smaller MICE groups are also looking at full charters of river cruises in Europe along the Rhine and Danube. These vessels take from around 120-180 guests, and are perfectly suited to the needs of Indian M&I groups, whilst allowing the guests to explore Europe in a different light. With these smaller sized vessels, agents and corporates are able to completely personalise the experience, giving a lot of flexibility to the M&I planners.

MICE groups find this very convenient as they can get the entire group under one roof. So they will not disappear as they do if you take them to cities like Dubai or Singapore. On the ship, you will have their rapt attention. Also, as far as MICE is concerned, the satisfaction levels are very high and by sheer word of mouth you get the next group and very often from the same company. That adds as a great visibility and a great initiative to promote business on cruises. For us, the MICE segment is growing very well. Thanks to ships close to home, we get a lot of business groups.



Nalini Udai Gupta
Head, India Operations
Costa Cruises

