



GHA DISCOVERY



## GLOBAL HOTEL ALLIANCE AND THE LEELA PALACES, HOTELS AND RESORTS HIGHLIGHT INDIAN MARKET'S HUGE TOURISM GROWTH POTENTIAL AT INAUGURAL SKIFT INDIA SUMMIT 2024

- *GHA DISCOVERY members in India generated a record \$68m in revenues in 2023*
- *GHA DISCOVERY India membership hits 540,000, up 21% YOY*
- *Domestic (51%) and international (49%) revenue from India members evenly split*
- *India member outbound revenue at GHA hotels reaches an all-time high of \$60m, surpassing 2019 figure*
- *Singapore, Thailand and the UAE are most popular outbound destinations for India members*
- *US, UK and Australia top source markets for travel to India*

**India, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024:** UAE-headquartered [Global Hotel Alliance \(GHA\)](#), the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands, which this year marks its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, highlighted the Indian market's unbridled tourism potential at the inaugural [Skift India Summit](#) which took place at The Leela Ambience Gurugram earlier this week.

Hosted by GHA and the alliance's major hotel brand in India, [The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts](#), the event brought together industry leaders and innovators to discuss emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the rapidly growing market.

GHA's stellar performance in India is indicative of the industry's sharp upward trajectory, with revenue generated by its 13 Indian hotels across three brands (Leela, Araiya and Oaks) hitting a record US\$68 million revenues in 2023, up from a previous pre-pandemic (2019) high of \$65 million, while the number of GHA DISCOVERY members residing in India also reached new heights, topping more than half a million (540,000), up 21% on 2022. Indian members also spent more at GHA hotels in India and around the world than ever before, generating a record \$60 million in hotel revenues, up 46% year-on-year and surpassing the 2019 total of \$41 million.

Domestic travel in India accounted for half of travel revenue in 2023 (51%), while international travel picked up strongly and surpassed the 2019 ratio, with the US, UK and Australia the top source markets for inbound travel. Meanwhile, preferred outbound destinations for India's GHA DISCOVERY members were Singapore, Thailand and the UAE respectively.

"With India one of the world's fastest-growing domestic and international travel markets, as reflected in our 2023 results, the first Skift India Summit presented a timely opportunity for GHA and our long-term partner of 17 years, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, to highlight the untold potential for expansion, from elevating GHA DISCOVERY membership among residents to boosting awareness of our growing India portfolio – this year increasing to 14 hotels across four brands – to our 26 million global loyalty members," said **GHA CEO Chris Hartley**.

"Our research, delving into the travel preferences and behaviours of our members, reveals some insightful inbound and outbound travel patterns and shines a spotlight on opportunities to educate GHA DISCOVERY members in India about the unique benefits of our loyalty

programme, including ways in which they can earn and redeem our rewards currency, DISCOVERY Dollars (D\$). With D\$1 equal to US\$1, we are effectively putting cash into travellers' pockets, encouraging them to spend at our hotels in India and with other global brands."

Aside from the revenue gains registered for the Indian market in 2023, GHA research also found:

- With soon to be 14 hotels in major destinations across the country, The Leela is the most recognisable brand for GHA DISCOVERY members in India.
- Indian members are planning on average four leisure trips, three staycations and five business trips in 2024, with the top three destinations being Europe, Thailand and Maldives.
- 50% of members in India have the desire to explore new destinations in 2024, prioritising foodie and adventure travel.
- Their top sources of leisure travel inspiration come from friends and family recommendations, online or social ads, and travel magazines.

"These Indian market trends, coupled with growing appetite to visit India from GHA DISCOVERY's 26-million-strong global membership, present immense opportunities for our portfolio of hotels, which not only offer luxury accommodation, but the destination experiences that today's travellers seek, from adventure, to cuisine, to nature," said **Anuraag Bhatnagar, Chief Executive Officer, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts.**

"The Skift India Summit provided a platform to share our knowledge with key industry players to further amplify domestic and international tourism and its socio-economic contribution as we plan for future growth."

India's hotel sector is booming, poised to contribute \$1.5 trillion to the country's economy by 2047, up from \$65 billion in 2022, according to Hotel Association of India forecasts. GHA plans to expand its hotel portfolio in India and is in discussions with several hotel brands to provide a broader range of destinations and segments for GHA DISCOVERY members. One new addition coming later this year is Anantara Hotels & Resorts opening its first property in North India later this year, the Anantara Jaipur Hotel.

This year marks GHA's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and over the years, the alliance has grown exponentially to now represent a collection of 40 brands with more than 800 hotels in 100 countries. The 26 million members of its GHA DISCOVERY loyalty programme, first launched in 2010, generated \$2.3 billion in revenue and 10 million room nights in 2023. Recent milestones include the reimagination of GHA DISCOVERY, including the launch of DISCOVERY Dollars (D\$), in 2021; NH Hotel Group joining the alliance in 2022, enhancing the GHA offering with 350 properties in 30 countries across three brands; the 2023 launch of Green Collection, empowering members to make conscious travel choices. GHA has diversified its loyalty offering with two new partnerships too, joining forces with ultra-luxury cruise line Regent Seven Seas Cruises in 2023 to reward cruisers with D\$ and status, and vacation rental platform Plum Guide in March this year, rewarding members who book one of 38,000 remarkable vacation homes.

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**About Global Hotel Alliance (GHA)**

Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) brings together a diverse collection of independent hospitality brands with GHA DISCOVERY, a multi-brand loyalty programme leveraging a shared technology platform. Through membership in GHA, brands expand their global reach, drive incremental revenue, and reduce dependence on third-party channels, all while maintaining management independence and individual positioning. GHA represents a collection of 40 brands with more than 800 hotels in 100 countries. The award-winning GHA DISCOVERY programme serves 26 million members and generated \$2.3 billion in revenue and 10 million room nights in 2023. GHA's brands currently include Anantara, Araiya, ASMALLWORLD, Avani, Bristoria, Capella, Corinthia, Divani, The Doyle Collection, Elewana, JA Resorts, Kempinski, Leela, Lore Group, Lungarno, Maqo, Marco Polo, Mysk, NH Collection, NH Hotels, nhow, Niccolo, Nikki Beach, NUO, Oaks, OUTRIGGER, Pan Pacific, PARKROYAL COLLECTION, PARKROYAL, Patina, The Residence by Cenizaro, The Set Collection, Shaza, Sukhothai, Sun International, Tivoli, Ultratravel Collection and Viceroy.

**About GHA DISCOVERY**

Launched in 2010, GHA DISCOVERY is the world's largest loyalty programme for independent hotel brands, featuring more than 800 hotels, resorts, and palaces across 40 brands. Members enjoy VIP recognition, thoughtful benefits and generous rewards at home or away. GHA DISCOVERY members earn and spend DISCOVERY Dollars (D\$), an exclusive rewards currency. They also enjoy member-only Experiences curated by each hotel, plus they have access to properties close to home, without a stay, through member-only Local Offers. For more information, visit [ghadiscovery.com](http://ghadiscovery.com)

**About The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts**

Headquartered in Mumbai, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts is owned by a Brookfield Asset Management-sponsored private real estate fund and operates eleven award-winning properties in major cities and leisure destinations across India. These include the flagship hotel in the capital city of New Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Udaipur, Jaipur, Gurugram, East Delhi, Mumbai, Gandhinagar and now Kovalam and Ashtamudi in Kerala. The Leela celebrates each hotel through its unique location, art, culture and cuisine with thoughtful services, celebratory rituals, and immersive experiences. The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts was voted the World's Best Hotel Brand twice in a row by Travel + Leisure, USA, World's Best Awards Survey, 2020 and 2021. In 2023, the brand has once again been featured in the top 3 World's Best Hotel Brands. An epitome of true Indian luxury hospitality, The Leela is committed to providing guests with unforgettable stays in settings that capture the essence of India. The brand has a marketing alliance with US-based Preferred Hotels & Resorts and is a member of the Global Hotel Alliance.

For more information, please visit our website [www.theleela.com](http://www.theleela.com) and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).