

# Hotelbeds launches in India

Product caters to 3,000 tour operators and 20,000 travel agencies

## B2B

Hotelbeds Accommodation & Destination Services, a B2B provider of incoming travel services to travel trade professionals worldwide, has launched its operations in India. The local team of the travel services provider will be responsible for the contracting and management of the entire Hotelbeds product portfolio in the country.

Hotelbeds enjoys the trust of more than 3,000 tour operators and over 20,000 travel agencies for its local expertise to deliver high quality in destination services to nearly 6 million customers annually. The products and services, which include hotels, transfers and excursions, packages and ground han-



Arjun Sharma, MD Le Passage to India.

dling services, are distributed through both, online and offline channels. Hotelbeds is active in 2,500 destinations spanning across 100 countries throughout Europe, Americas, Africa,

Asia and Pacific.

The [www.hotelbeds.com](http://www.hotelbeds.com) portal and Le Passage to India Tours & Travels are both part of TUI Travel Plc Group, world's leading travel conglomerate. Ashvini

Kumar, General Manager, Le Passage to India will head the Hotelbeds team, which will also be based at the company's Noida office. Ashvini will be supported by a team of contracting managers and yield managers based out of Delhi, Mumbai, Goa and Kathmandu. Commenting on the launch, Arjun Sharma, Managing Director, Le Passage to India said, "We are delighted to be a part of Hotelbeds, one of the world's largest online wholesalers, which will through its strong team now offer hotels in all categories across India. In the first year of operation itself, we hope to book 80,000-100,000 room nights, and grow the business effectively in today's challenging markets."

## Indian VoA for four more countries

### VISA

The Government has extended the visa on arrival scheme for the tourists from Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines and Laos from January this year. This scheme was launched last year for tourists from Finland, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand and Singapore. According to figures released for the month of January, 2011, nationals of New Zealand (242), Finland (156) and Japan (155) topped the scheme, followed by Singapore (125), Philippines (98), Luxembourg (6), Cambodia (4) and Vietnam (4). The maximum number of visas on arrival were issued at Delhi airport (406), followed by Mumbai (214), Chennai (137) and Kolkata (33).

## Six travel agencies partner, form Landmark Journeys

### PARTNERSHIP

A group of travel agents based in different geographical locations have come together to form a the partnership. Named 'Landmark Journeys' it is a partnership between medium-sized owner driven companies including Travels & Rentals, Trail Blazer Tours, Odyssey Tours and Travels, Equino Fun Holidays and Bharath International Travels and one B2B player Saltours International. Gauri Jayaram regional director -South Asia & Middle East says that the advantage of such a partnership lies in the power of a joint brand, sharing of risks and drawing on shared expertise.

"The decision to pool in the experience and expertise of all the partners is a unique initiative, which will take us all to greater heights together", says Nikhil Thakurdas, CEO - Uniglobe Odyssey Travels, Pune who has been assigned the role of brand manager for Landmark Journeys.

The company will specialise in group tours to Europe and the US with Cosmos as land operator. For the first year, Landmark Journeys is offering a choice of five itineraries including two European Panoramas, one tour each to Spain, East Europe and USA. The tours are aimed at Indian travellers,

who want a mix of an Indian and International touring experience, while travelling with other cosmopolitan Indians. "This is not just the coming together of a progressive partnership; we also seriously aiming to fill the gap between traditional Indian operated tours and International vacations by offering new vacation experiences to Indian travellers", says Devendra Parekh, Director - Travels & Rentals, Kolkata.

A consumer website [www.landmarkjourneys.in](http://www.landmarkjourneys.in) has been created. Commenting on whether Landmark Journeys can accept more partnerships Jayaram says, "The



Devendra Parekh

understanding between the existing travel agents includes specific guidelines on adding new members - such as all existing members have to; without exception; agree on adding the new proposed partner. Some other parameters include



Gauri Jayaram

that the new partners should not be in geographical areas where existing partners have a set up, they should preferably be owner driven companies, have a focus on outbound travel and be willing to invest funds like the existing travel agents have."