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Rush for leisure destinations likely during Diwali weekend

Domestic travel segment witnessed a 25% rise in forward bookings compared to a year ago

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Hospitality and travel firms are expecting a surge in demand for leisure destinations during the long Diwali weekend until the year-end holidays.

1 Thomas Cook (India) Ltd expects the extended weekend comprising Diwali, Bhai Dooj and Govardhan Puja, to see three times increase in travel demand compared to the year-ago. According to the company, the Indian tourism industry is seeing a spike in demand during the 5-9 days of travel opportunity around the festive holidays.

“Diwali is an important festival and migrant working professionals travel back to their hometowns to celebrate Diwali with families,” said Rajeev Kale, president and country head, holidays, MICE (meetings, incentives, conferencing and exhibitions), visa, Thomas Cook (India).

Domestic travel demand witnessed a 25% rise in forward bookings compared to the previous year, primarily for locations such as Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Kerala, Goa, Andamans, Rajasthan, Gujarat and the North East. There is an uptick of 15-20% for outdoor-adventure camping, biking trips, trekking and private villa stays, the firm said. For Thomas Cook, short-haul overseas destinations like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Indonesia, are also seeing 30% rise in demand.

SOTC Travel, a stepdown subsidiary of Thomas Cook, is witnessing 7-10 day advance holiday bookings and over 70% rise in last-minute bookings for the long Diwali weekend compared to other weekends in October-November.

“Indians across segments are show-



The five most-searched destinations for Diwali are New Delhi, Goa, Mysore, Mumbai and Port Blair.

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ing increased interests to travel to their favourite destinations—domestic and international. Customers are keen to utilize the upcoming festive weekend and we have a strong pipeline of customers planning near-term travel. Our demand trends indicate a jump of over 100% of pre-pandemic levels in certain

Travel tech solutions provider RateGain, which processes electronic transactions for travel and hospitality firms, has witnessed 15% higher bookings for the Diwali week compared to the year-ago period, and around 10% rise from the corresponding period in 2019. People are looking at destinations like Goa,

pancy during the holiday weekend.

Tarun Tahiliani, country manager of travel search platform Kayak India said higher airfares are not deterring Indian tourists from travelling to domestic and overseas destinations during Diwali. “Domestic search insights suggest 21 October will be the busiest day at airports over the festive Diwali period, so those hoping for smooth sailing to their destination may prefer to set off on a slightly earlier or later date.”

According to flight search data, the five most-searched destinations during Diwali are New Delhi, Goa, Mysore, Mumbai and Port Blair (Andaman and Nicobar Islands).

Vikramjit Singh, president of Lemon Tree Hotels, said its resort locations in Goa, Alleppey, Udaipur, Coorg and Rishikesh, among others, are expecting to be sold out during the long weekend.

CHECKING IN

THERE is an uptick of 15-20% for outdoor-adventure camping, biking trips, and trekking

SOTC Travel is witnessing 70% rise in last-minute bookings for the long Diwali weekend

PEOPLE are looking at destinations like Goa, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan

HIGHER airfares are not deterring people from travelling to domestic or overseas destinations

markets for winter and festive season travel, and our forward booking position is looking healthy. We are approximately at 55% recovery of our October to December period versus 2019,” said Daniel D’Souza, president and country head, holidays, SOTC Travel.

Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan, RateGain added.

Leisure Hotels Group, which operates hotels across Nainital, Naukuchia-tal, Bhimtal, Jim Corbett National Park, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Varanasi and Kausani, said it is seeing 60% occu-