



Ministry of Tourism



Ministry of Tourism organises a webinar on “India’s Hidden Gems” under Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Series




The series Dekho Apna Desh are organised to promote the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat

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The Ministry of Tourism’s Dekho Apna Desh Webinar series titled “India’s Hidden Gems” on 21st November 2020 focused on hidden gems of India. India is truly like a kaleidoscope, where every twist and turn will present you with a different pattern of landscape, colour, cuisine and culture. This also inspires the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. The best way to experience this is by traveling to destinations that are not popular on the internet, and as much as you can, by road.

The webinar was presented by Ms. Bindu Menon, an expat relocation manager, an intercultural trainer and a brand communications specialist by profession, a linguaphile, an India enthusiast, an avid traveler and writer by passion. Bindu has delighted in presenting India to the world at every given opportunity. She started her presentation with a quote “Life is more exciting when one treads away from the everyday path, seeking bold new horizons”.

The travel journey started from Amarambalam, Nilambur, which lies in the North of Kerala. Nilambur is a small town on the banks of the Chaliyar river in Mallappuram district, Kerala. This place is renowned for ‘Conally’s Plot’ or the oldest teak plantation in the world. The first railway line in Kerala was introduced to transport teak. Tourists can enjoy a wonderful train rides from Shornur to Nilambur. This place also has a hanging bridge at the Chaliyar river. New Amarambalam forest was declared as reserved forest in the Western Ghats and it is home of the indigenous Cholanaickan tribes. Environment enthusiast can also enjoy Amara wildlife Sanctuary which is the 18th wildlife sanctuary of India.

Great Hornbill resorts – Owned by a retired banker and his son, this property is located in Amarambalam, Nilambur, Kerala. Great Hornbill (Vezhambal) is also the official bird of Kerala. It is a bio diversity hotspot over 7 acres placed prettily between two mountains wrapped on three sides by the forest. With the mighty mountains as the backdrop, the Amarambalam forest that is home to the Cholanaikar tribe, a perennially gushing fresh water stream with medicinal properties, hundreds of butterflies, a million fireflies and exotic plants all around, a completely sustainable vegetable garden and much more, this is certainly a secret paradise. It is a great experience of nature surrounding the soul bringing calmness and peace.

f From Amarambalam, Ms. Bindu Menon took us virtually to Dudhsagar Plantation. Dudhsagar can be described as a 4 tiered falls located on the Mandovi river gushing down like gallons of milk. This can be best viewed from Amravati Express. The property owned and managed by Malkarnekar. He bought a piece of barren land located in the Eastern part of the State towards the Western Ghats. Now what we **find** is a green oasis inside Goa. Dudhsagar Plantation, Goa is a 50-acre property with cashew plantations, a spice garden, a tropical palm garden, a nature trail and a unique natural pool. The **Malkarnekar** who own and manage the property ensure their guests experience the pleasure of rustic life in the midst of nature.

Important tourist attractions are Bhagwan Mahavir wildlife sanctuary, Braganza House, 12th century temple- Tambdi-Surla temple etc.

in The third hidden gem was Save Farms, Dahanu, Maharashtra. Shri Prabakhar Save dedicated his life for environment. Tarpa Agro Eco tourism is a novel venture of Save farms. Tarpa is named after the Warli tribal musical instrument. Save farm is located at about 130 kms from Mumbai, in north Konkan region of Maharashtra state. It was established in 1970, on a barren piece of land. It was a great challenge to develop the infertile and eroded land in to a horticultural orchard that can be seen today and enjoy coconut, avocado, spices and 400 other identified plant varieties. They also organize adventure activities in tune with the rustic ambience. One also get an opportunity to discover and learn rural life, a mini museum for people to visit and take home jams, pickles etc.

One common thread between these three hidden gems is that each is run by father and son duos, who are equally passionate about giving back to nature.

Summing up the webinar Rupinder Brar , Additional Director General spoke about India's diversity with different dialect, culture, cuisine etc and the experience that a traveler gets is amazing. India is also safe for women travelers as long as they avoid venturing out alone after dark.

The Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Series is presented in technical partnership with National e Governance Department, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. The Sessions of Webinar are now available on the https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbzIbBmMvtvH7d6Zo_ZEHDA/featured and also on all social media Handles of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

The next webinar on adventure trails is scheduled on 28th November 2020 at 11.00 am.

NB/KP/OA

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