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WEEKEND

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Say hello to the world

In India, domestic tourism remains the largest market. "Although Goa, Kerala and Himachal remain the most sort after destinations, places like Kashmir, Leh, Ladakh and Sikkim, which kept on thriving on foreign tourists till date, are seeing a rise in Indian Holiday makers over the last two years or so in a big way," says Prem Syal—CEO and MD of Hi! Tours India.

Outbound tourism from India has been growing at a steady pace of 10.5% over the last three years and due to the rupee falling this year most of the Indian holiday travellers have postponed their plans to 2013 which looks to be a promising year for outbound travelling. Desired destinations in this category have been Switzerland, Rest of Europe, USA, UK and Dubai. However, a growing demand is now also noticed for destinations such as Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Macao and Malaysia. Future of destinations such as China and central Asia also looks good provided airlines increase their connectivity and Tourism Boards work



Prem Syal

towards making these destinations more pocket friendly. Sri Lanka will also get a boost with cricket T-20 around the corner and this is going to give a great boost to the Indian sub-continent, informed Syal.

Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Egypt and Turkey are also growing in popularity amongst Indian holidaymakers but beach destinations like Mauritius, Maldives and Seychelles hold their own charm among honeymooners. New destinations such as Scandic and Baltic countries are also getting offered now to the Indian holiday market. Although business travel contributes to more than 40% of the outbound traffic from India, leisure segment with niche products like exotic honeymoon packages, cruise holidays & MICE is also growing with a steady pace. Luxury holiday segment for HNIs and adventure holidays are upcoming segments and only a few companies like Hi! Tours India are focusing on it, as only a few tour operators specialise in these segments in India. So people, look out for a calendar and fix a date, take out time to discuss with your family and friends, start looking for a destination of your choice or approach a tour operator now.