



Around the World

If you have a holiday in mind, log on to the Web before rushing off to book your tickets

Let's begin our online journey at www.travelocity.com, a site that caters to those who want to book a flight, rent a car, reserve a hotel room or charter a cruise. Though the screen looks cluttered, the abundant options make navigation simple. You can follow links such as fare finder, booking flight box, travel tools and cruise options. A unique feature that Travelocity offers is its Fare Watcher E-mail. The intelligent agent does a good job of searching for the very best fares for your trip, takes your budget into consideration and keeps you notified about the latest fares round the clock. This service is free to all members of Travelocity.

www.itravel.com.au/travel-guides.htm succeeds in creating a holiday mood by describing a wide expanse of blue waters caressing an island. It allows you to select a destination, and you can take your pick from Europe, the Middle East, South and Central America, Australia, Asia and Africa. The site, which prides itself as



being an Internet travel agent, lists airfares, informs you of the best package deals, equips you with travel guides, finds hotels that suit your taste and budget, and arranges for transportation and travel services.

Welcome to www.travelweb.com. This fascinating site has everything one needs to be familiar with before embarking on a trip. It gives you a hotel and flight search option and also takes care

of travel reservations, using the most secure encryption technology. Moreover, every customer using TravelWeb is automatically included in the Secure Transaction Guarantee. This ensures that you don't work yourself up over the possibility of your card being

used without authorisation.

Are you a travel freak who hates making extensive plans and deposits? If you don't mind taking risks, www.priceline.com is worth checking out. Let us assume you want to tour Florida but lack the moolah. All you have to do is quote a price that you can afford. Many airline flights do not carry a full complement of passengers except during the holiday season. Taking advantage of this, Priceline

plays the role of a broker and negotiates with the airline and lets you know whether they have accepted the offer you quoted. Now you can fly to Miami at half the rate! There also exists free online loan and mortgage financing facilities that enable you to get the exact financing you want. You can even buy a car of your choice after you find a dealer willing to accept the price you quoted.

If you love golf, <http://gto.com> is the right place for you, but non-golfers need not fret. Golf Travel Online helps you select your destination for a dream vacation. Take your pick from a variety of



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http://gto.com



places, see what the travel package store offers and pay a virtual visit to some of the best resorts in the US. There are separate prices for non-golfers, so they need not feel left out.

You can also select a tour from the categories listed, such as the British Open, Scotland, Ayrshire or Australian tour. Don't miss the listing of various kinds of holes, including classy, mystical and par-bustin ones. There are lists of holes that made golf history, nightmarish holes, events that occurred at certain golf tournaments and the like. A contrast of different styles of play and cultures (for instance, Japanese and American) is interesting.

Designed with the woman traveller in mind, www.journeywoman.com is an online premier travel resource containing an exhaustive list of travel-related tips. You come across gal-friendly city sites, international travel tips, travel

tales from women around the world, travel classifieds and other links. The Journeywoman Network claims to help you with health tips, booking hotel rooms for prices as low as \$50, cybershopping and tips on travel wear. Another unique concept is that of a free newsletter that you can sign up for, and a journey doctor who assures you of a safe travel. The bookstore is also worth a visit.

www.asiatravel.com claims to be a reservation service for over 1000 hotels and resorts worldwide. It contains comprehensive and factual information on all listed hotels and resorts, details on air ticketing, transfer services, sightseeing and tour packages that help in planning a holiday.

A virtual visit to any of the listed destinations links you to airport information, travel information and sightseeing tips. It also gives you a list of hotels that offer discounts of up to 75% on prepayment basis and those that offer discount up to 60% on payment upon check in. For the price-conscious, asiatravel.com has listed rooms with rates varying from \$40 to \$140. Clicking on any of the destinations would take you to the major cities and locations, and list the hotels in that area.

The maverick www.armchair.com gives travel information and advice, and facilitates hotel reservations, airline tickets and Eurail passes, but what sets this site apart are its links to travel-related insurance, medicine, currency conversion, perspectives on science, and discussions on mental health and psychiatry. You can shop for the gourmet helper, holograms, fountains, books, medical kits, air purifiers and plant sitters that care for your plants while you're away. That's as innovative as you

can get!

As the name suggests, www.travel-india.com is a purely India-centric site. It gives you access to places, maps, history and news. A chakra signifying progress and motion, attempts to impart a patriotic fervour. An attractive layout makes navigation easy. A click on historical landmarks would ask you to choose the period. For instance, you can view all events that took place in India from AD 1600 to AD 1800, or even the happenings of the last few years. Other options include links to tourist places, geographical data and historical landmarks. There is also a hotel finder and travel agent finder.

www.welcometoindia.com offers a virtual visit to national parks, beaches, hill stations and heritage sites in India. The tourist guide promises to help you

www.armchair.com



out with tourist offices, embassies and formalities that you may have to comply with. The tips attempt to give the traveller a basic idea about how things work in the land of snake charmers, and how



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one should go about managing money and credit cards. Simple things like bak-sheesh (tipping) and its relevance are explained well, as are tips on health problems, drugs and theft. Welcome to India also gives coverage to Indian Railways, and a fare structure table makes the site complete.

www.worldoftravel.com is a place where you can read travel tales by Jon Hersh (Vice President of World of Trav-



el). Personal notes and handy tips equip the novice as well as the seasoned traveller in going on an African safari, taking a trip to Bermuda, flying in a supersonic aircraft, or simply checking out luxury and value tours. World of Travel even plays secretary for you, assisting you in site selection, setting up meeting rooms and audio-visual aids. Hotel requests and registration processing are also taken care of.

www.tourindia.com is maintained by the Government of India tourist office in New York. It provides information to those visiting India for the first time. The mission and posts link gives complete addresses of all Indian embassies worldwide. There are also statistics on population, GDP, per capita income, agriculture and crop yield. Check out the national

insignia to know more about the country's anthem, emblem and flag, and also the national bird, animal and flower. A fair share of tourist locales, travel, medical, hotel and airlines information is presented.

The crowded home page of <http://travel.indianart.com> may put you off, but on closer observation, the site does prove to be useful. It is home to a host of links that promise loads of utility. Among the most

striking are adventure India, online hotel directory, tour operator details and city travel guide.

Other links give an overview of various fairs and festivals, places of worship, culture and mythology. The hot spots link takes you to picturesque locations

as Khajuraho, Jaisalmer and Rishikesh, among others.

The gifts and handicrafts section has an ethnic touch, with the kind of materials, products and processes featured.

For an attractively designed site with systematically arranged links, you could visit www.tourtravelindia.com. It is a travel guide for the business traveller a segment that many sites ignore. The site offers travel help and support, and provides links to major banks, both Indian and multinational. Unique features, such as a currency converter, travel forum, weather forecast and tips



on packing, add to the popularity of this site.

www.passagetoindia.com is a very colourful, interactive and inviting site that promises to handle all your travel-related queries. You can choose one of their group tours or customise your trip to India.

In case of a customised tour, you have complete control over the trip. So, if you've made up your mind on the kind of tour, you can select from an exhaustive range that offers a Panorama of India and Nepal, Northern Heritage Safari, Mountains and Monasteries, Millennium India and more.

There's also the Southern Sojourn to look out for, with special attractions

SITES TO VISIT

- www.atevo.com/guides/worldatlas
- www.mindia.com
- www.inetindia.com/travel
- www.surfindia.com/travellinks.htm
- www.kesaritours.com
- www.lonelyplanet.com

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such as Ayurveda therapy, sandalwood,
spices and wildlife.