



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Illinois Office of Tourism Opens International Office in India to Attract More Overseas Visitors

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Office of Tourism is proud to announce the opening of its newest international office in New Delhi, India. This strategic expansion aims to attract more overseas visitors to Illinois, capitalizing on the growing interest from Indian travelers and further enhancing the state's global tourism profile.

India is one of the top five international markets for visitors to Illinois, showing remarkable growth over recent years. From 2019 to 2023, Indian visitation surged by 55%, firmly establishing India as a key source market for Illinois tourism.

"Opening our office in New Delhi is a strategic move to build on the growing interest from India and strengthen our ties with this important market," said **DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. "International visitors are vital to growing our state's tourism economy because they stay longer and spend more money in the U.S. than the average domestic traveler. We look forward to showcasing Illinois' unique attractions and vibrant culture to even more Indian travelers."

"The Indian traveler's interest in luxury experiences, our world-class culinary offerings, and rich cultural heritage make Illinois an ideal destination," said **Daniel Thomas, deputy director of DCEO, Office of Tourism**. "Establishing this new office in New Delhi allows us to better engage with this market and ensure that Indian visitors experience the very best of what Illinois has to offer."

The opening of IOT's first office in India comes at a time of significant international visitation growth to Illinois. In 2023, the state welcomed 112 million domestic and international visitors who spent \$47 billion in 2023 – an increase of 1 million visitors and \$3 billion in spending from 2022, according to data provided by Tourism Economics. Illinois welcomed 2.16 million international visitors, a remarkable 39% increase from the previous year. This surge underscores Illinois' rising status as a sought-after global destination.

Sartha Global Marketing LLP in India will lead travel trade and PR programs to inspire Indian travelers to explore all Illinois has to offer. The New Delhi office joins existing offices in the UK, Germany, and Mexico, supporting Illinois tourism's global marketing and trade efforts.

"We are excited to commence work promoting Illinois in India, a state that has something for every Indian traveler. With Chicago as an excellent gateway, Illinois offers dynamic cities, breathtaking outdoor adventures, diverse attractions, and a rich historical legacy," said

Sheema Vohra, Managing Director, Sartha Global Marketing LLP. “We are honored to partner with the Illinois Office of Tourism to promote this wonderful state, a must-visit destination.”

Luxury and culinary experiences are particularly important to the Indian market, with many travelers seeking high-end shopping, world-class dining, and immersive cultural experiences. Illinois, with its vibrant luxury scene and renowned culinary landscape—from Michelin-starred restaurants in Chicago to celebrated local chefs across the state—provides the perfect destination for Indian visitors looking for a sophisticated travel experience. Illinois is easily accessible for visitors from India, with its numerous airports, including the Chicago O'Hare International Airport, one of the busiest in the world, offering direct flight connectivity from India.

About the Illinois Office of Tourism:

The Illinois Office of Tourism leads tourism industry efforts to inspire visitation to, and within Illinois, resulting in significant economic impact and quality-of-life benefits for all Illinois residents. We are committed to making Illinois a model of inclusivity and celebration of diversity.

Illinois is a state that embodies innovation, craft, surprise and creativity. Whether domestic and international visitors are traveling for business or leisure, the Illinois Office of Tourism is their trusted guide in crafting an unforgettable experience.

To learn more, [EnjoyIllinois.com](https://www.enjoyillinois.com).