



World

Luxury Travel

Vol. 2 Issue 6 January, 2014

Magazine

Famous Clock Towers
around the World

**Myanmar Hotel
and Travel
Conference
(MHTC) 2014**

Malaysia
Truly Asia

**February Festivals
around the Globe**

Travel *for Tea*
Tea tourism in Asia



The New Year is here with possibilities and opportunities to travel to new experiences. It is said travel is the only thing you can buy that still makes you rich. We couldn't agree more! The richness of experiences you get from traveling cannot be replaced by anything. The best part is these experiences are to treasure forever!

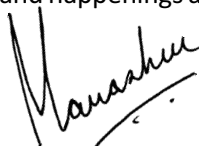
The one thing we love the most is - to travel in comfort and style. Continuing the journey to the amazing spots on planet earth, we present you the Famous Clock Towers around the World. It is amazing how these landmarks, besides being time pieces, played many roles in the human history around the globe!

This month, we are visiting Malaysia. Malaysian tourism has developed leaps and bounds over the years. The year 2014 is being celebrated as Tourism Malaysia Year. Read on and plan your Malaysia visit with our coverage under Country Getaway.

If you love your cup of tea, take a hot sip of our feature this month! The feature, Travel for Tea - Tea tourism in Asia takes you through the many destinations and tour options. This journey will not only satisfy your tea cravings, but will also give you amazing insights about this drink.

Mark your February Calendar for the upcoming Myanmar Hotel and Travel Conference (MHTC) 2014. For more details, jump to our Event Watch section of the e-zine. The Happenings section would give you information on the other interesting events and happenings around the globe.

Season's greetings and happy travels!


Manashree Prakash
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Contents

Famous Clock Towers around the World



5 || Cover Story

Country Getaway || 24



Malaysia Truly Asia

Feature || 36



Travel for Tea *Tea tourism in Asia*

Myanmar Hotel and Travel Conference (MHTC) 2014



56
Event Watch

60
Happenings

February Festivals around the Globe



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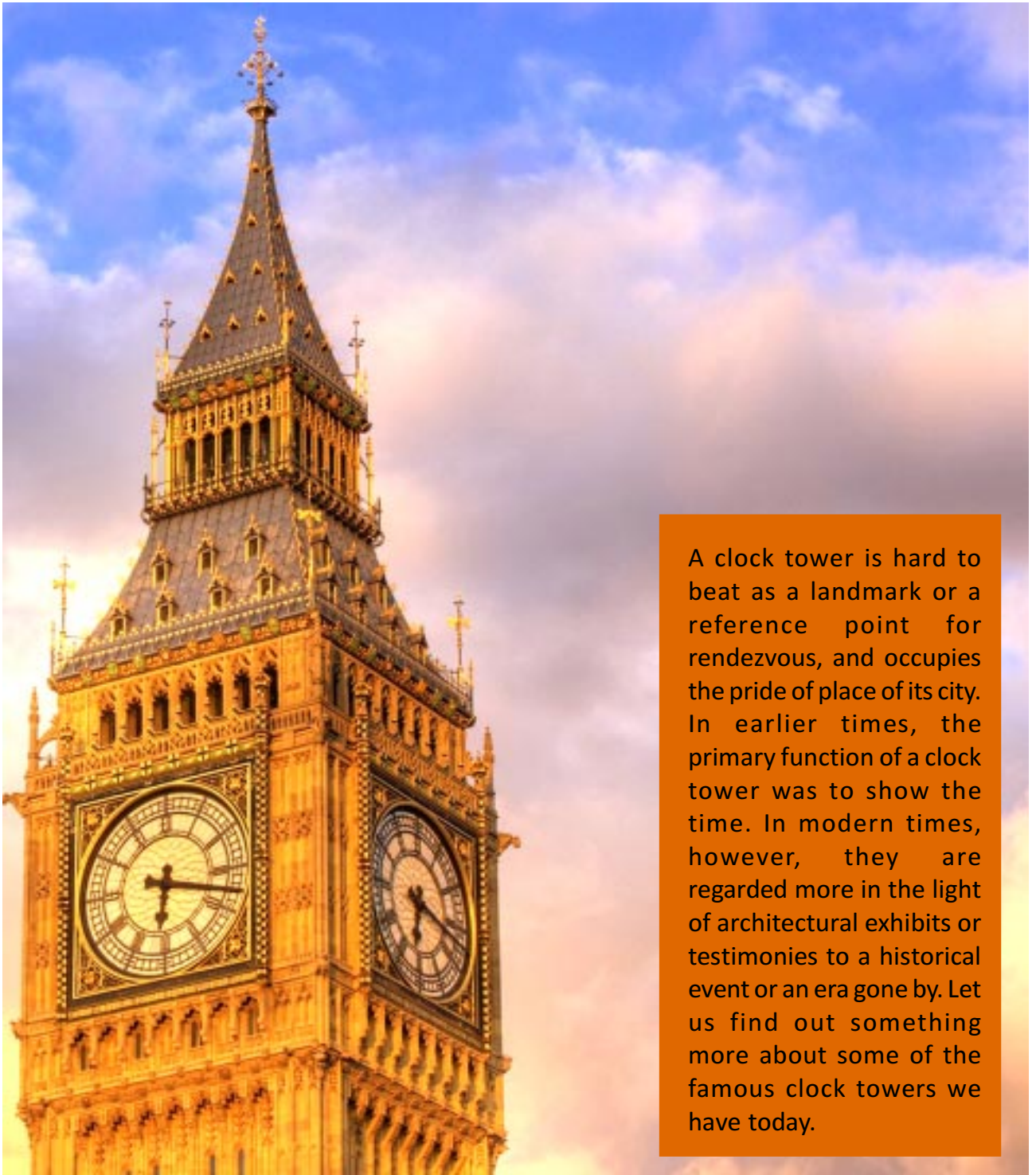


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Famous Clock Towers around the World

Cover
Story





A clock tower is hard to beat as a landmark or a reference point for rendezvous, and occupies the pride of place of its city. In earlier times, the primary function of a clock tower was to show the time. In modern times, however, they are regarded more in the light of architectural exhibits or testimonies to a historical event or an era gone by. Let us find out something more about some of the famous clock towers we have today.

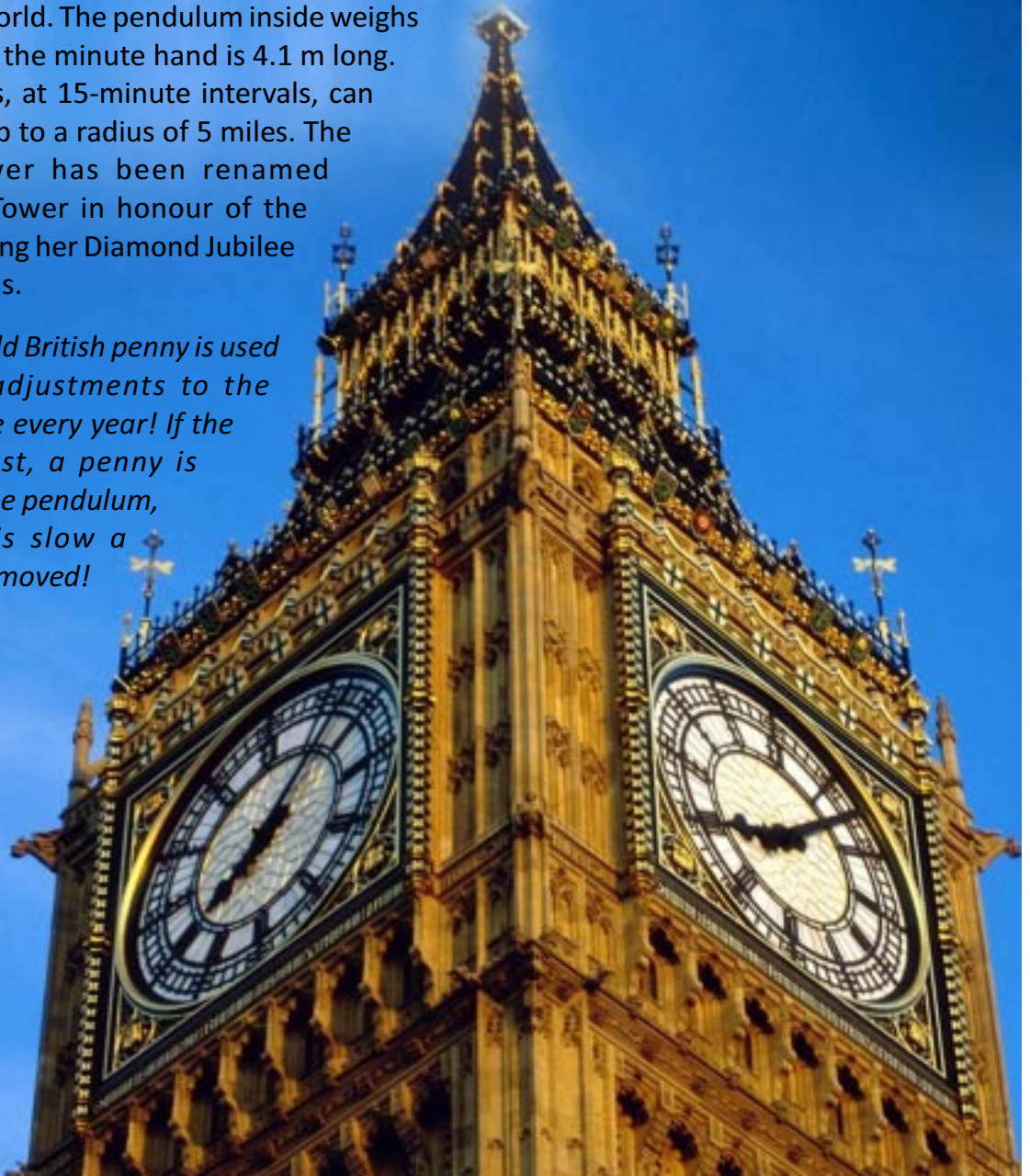
Big Ben, London, United Kingdom

The iconic Big Ben is undoubtedly the first clock tower that comes to mind while making a list like this. Though the name actually refers to the mammoth bell inside the London Clock Tower, it is popularly used for the clock and the tower too! Located in the north end of the Westminster Palace in London, this bell



tower was designed by Charles Barry and completed in 1858. It has the distinction of being the world's largest four-faced chiming clock and the third largest free-standing clock tower (96.31 m) in the world. The pendulum inside weighs 310 kg and the minute hand is 4.1 m long. The chimes, at 15-minute intervals, can be heard up to a radius of 5 miles. The Clock Tower has been renamed Elizabeth Tower in honour of the Queen during her Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Trivia: An old British penny is used to make adjustments to the clock's time every year! If the clock is fast, a penny is added to the pendulum, and if it is slow a penny is removed!





Prague Astronomical Clock, Czech Republic

This legendary clock is believed to be the oldest operating clock in the world. It stands in the Old Town City Hall in the Old Town Hall Tower and was installed in 1410. This amazing clock has an astronomical dial indicating the position of the sun and moon and a calendar dial showing the date and the zodiac sign





of each month. It also has a skeleton, representing Death, pulling a string while looking at the other hand holding an hour glass. The most famous feature of the clock is "The Walk of the Apostles" where wooden figures of the 12 apostles and other figures move in a procession from a small window above the clock, marking every hour. Visitors can ascend to the top of the tower using the stairs or elevator, and enjoy breath-taking views of the Old Town Square.

Trivia: The main function of the clock was not to show time but to show the movement of the celestial bodies!



Zytglogge, Bern, Switzerland

The landmark, 179 feet tall Zytglogge Tower dates back to the 13th century. A 'Heritage Site of National Significance', it has served the various roles of guard tower, prison, clock tower, civic memorial and an urban centre. In the 15th century, an astronomical clock was added to it to show the movements of planets and the days of the

week. The ornate clock with its moving figures was the main clock of Bern. The highlight of the clock is the gilded knight's figure that marks the time by striking at the hour bell with his hammer. Another highlight is the revolving bears that move in a procession carrying musical instruments.

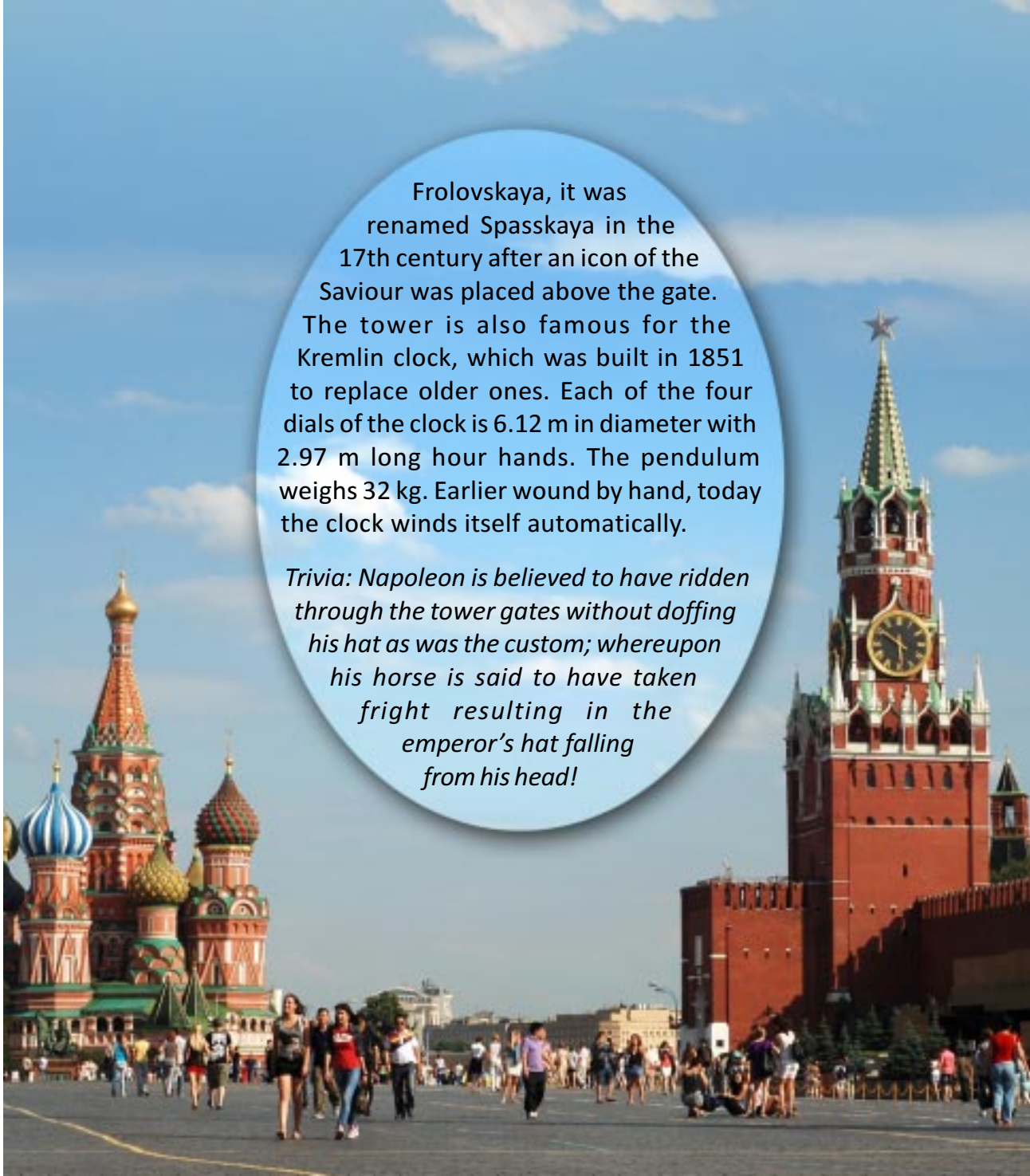
Trivia: It is believed that the Zytglogge clock played a role in helping Einstein develop his theory of relativity while he was working as a patent clerk in Bern!



The Saviour's (Spasskaya) Tower, Moscow, Russia

This historic tower stands in the legendary Red Square in Moscow. The tower was designed in 1491 by Pietro Antonio Solari, an Italian architect. The clock was installed later in 1625 and was the official timekeeper used for ceremonial processions. The tower gates were the official entrance to Kremlin and legend has it that the tower has magical powers to protect the Kremlin from invasions. Earlier known as the





Frolovskaya, it was renamed Spasskaya in the 17th century after an icon of the Saviour was placed above the gate. The tower is also famous for the Kremlin clock, which was built in 1851 to replace older ones. Each of the four dials of the clock is 6.12 m in diameter with 2.97 m long hour hands. The pendulum weighs 32 kg. Earlier wound by hand, today the clock winds itself automatically.

Trivia: Napoleon is believed to have ridden through the tower gates without doffing his hat as was the custom; whereupon his horse is said to have taken fright resulting in the emperor's hat falling from his head!

Rajabai Clock Tower, Mumbai, India

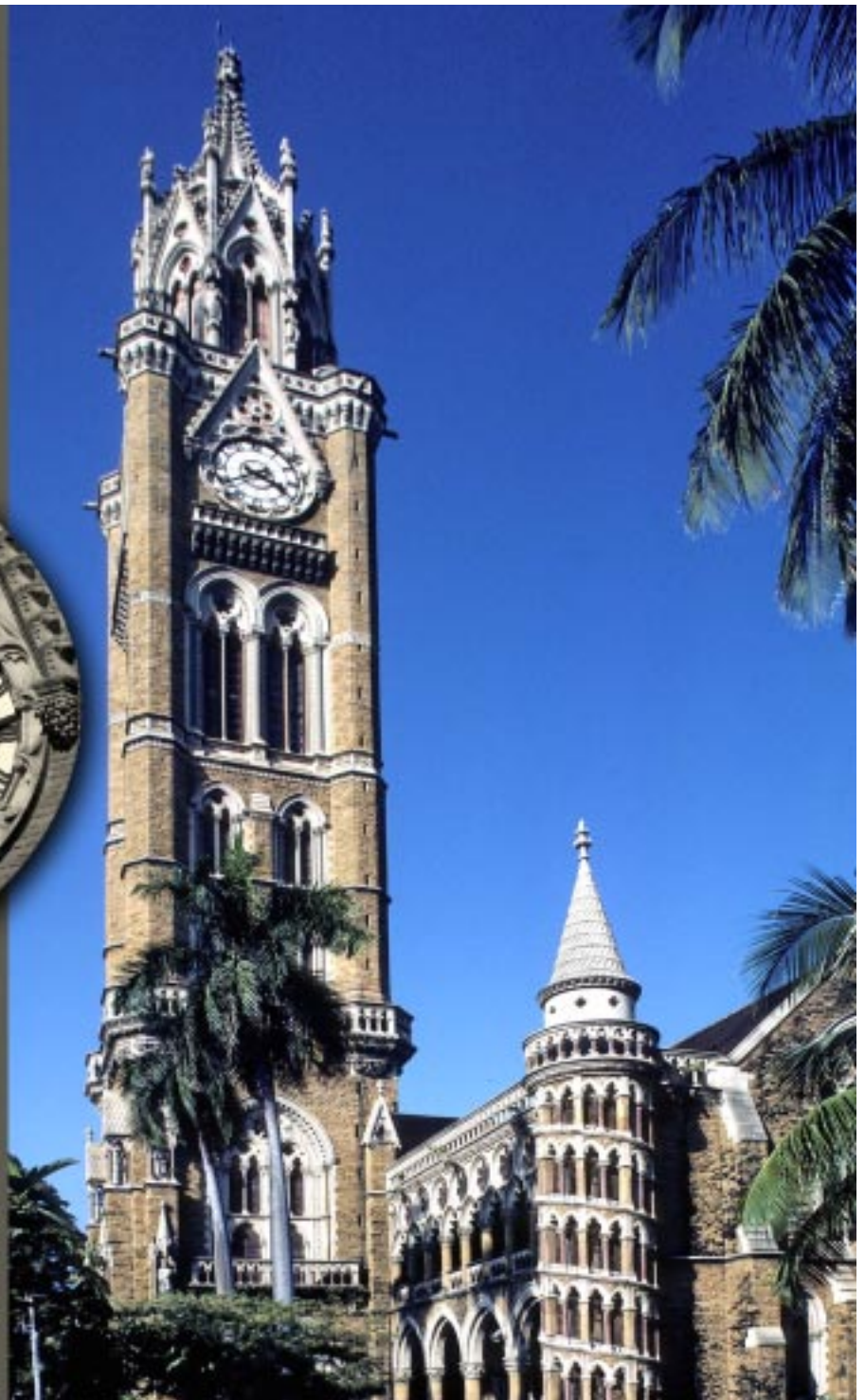
Standing tall at 85 m, this tower is located in the Fort campus of the University of Mumbai. Modelled along the lines of the Big Ben by Sir Gilbert Scott, an English architect,

the tower was completed in 1878 at a cost of Rupees two lakhs. The amount, large by the standards of the day, was provided by Premchand Roychand, the affluent broker who founded the Bombay Stock Exchange. He stipulated that the tower be named after his mother

Rajabai. The lady was a strict follower of Jainism and it was her custom to have her dinner before evening. She was blind and it was the sound of the clock which told her

the time without anyone's help.

Trivia: The tower, which was earlier open to the public, was closed after it became a frequent suicide point!



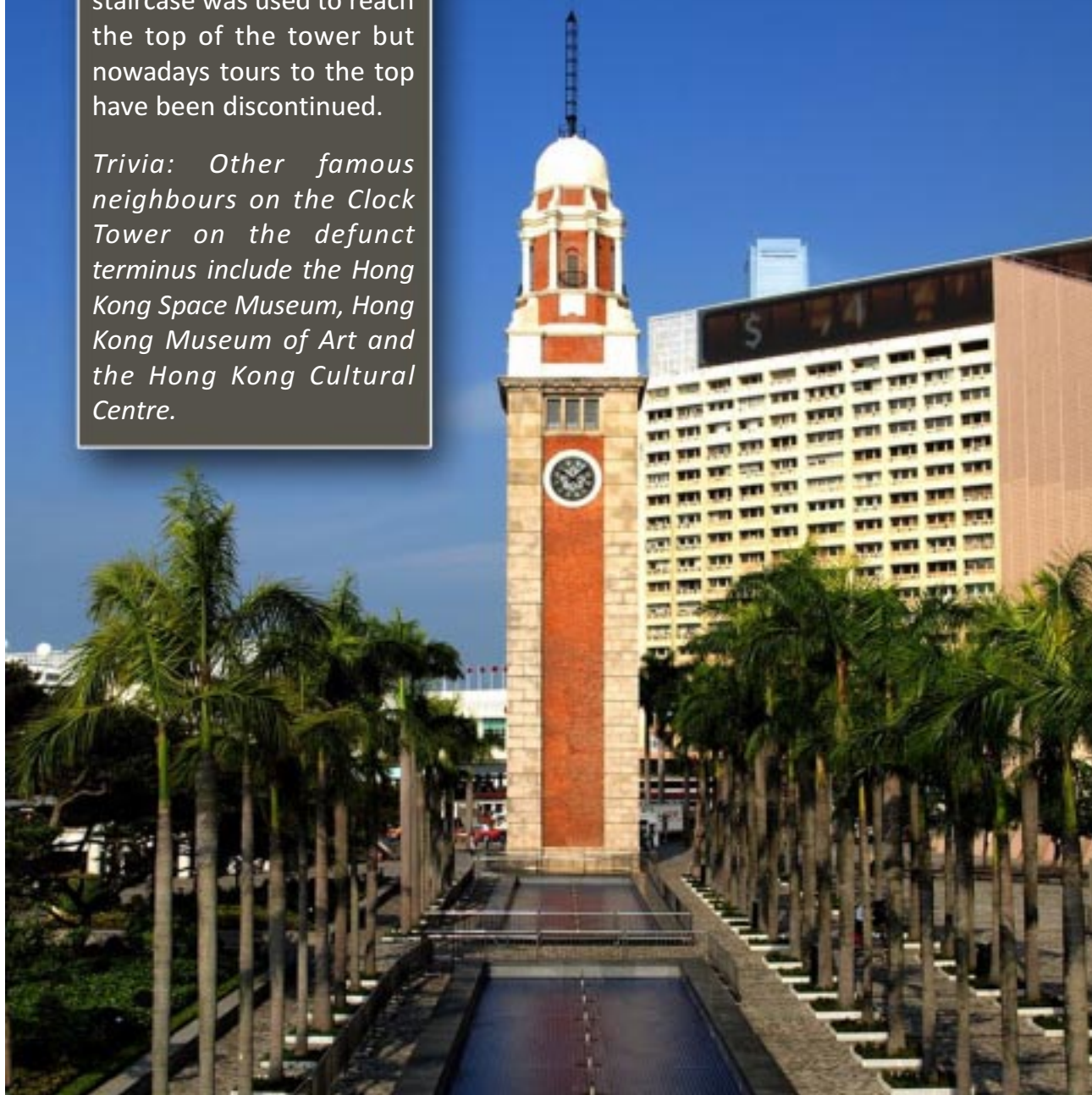
Tsim Sha Tsui Clock Tower, Hong Kong

One of Hong Kong's oldest landmarks, the Clock Tower on the southern shore of Tsim Sha Tsui, stands beside another landmark, the Victoria Harbour. It is one of the first sights to greet the travellers' eyes' on entering Hong Kong. Built in 1915 as part of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Terminus, the tower is 44 m tall, with a 7 m tall lightning rod at the top. The station no longer exists but the



tower does and is a declared monument. A wooden staircase was used to reach the top of the tower but nowadays tours to the top have been discontinued.

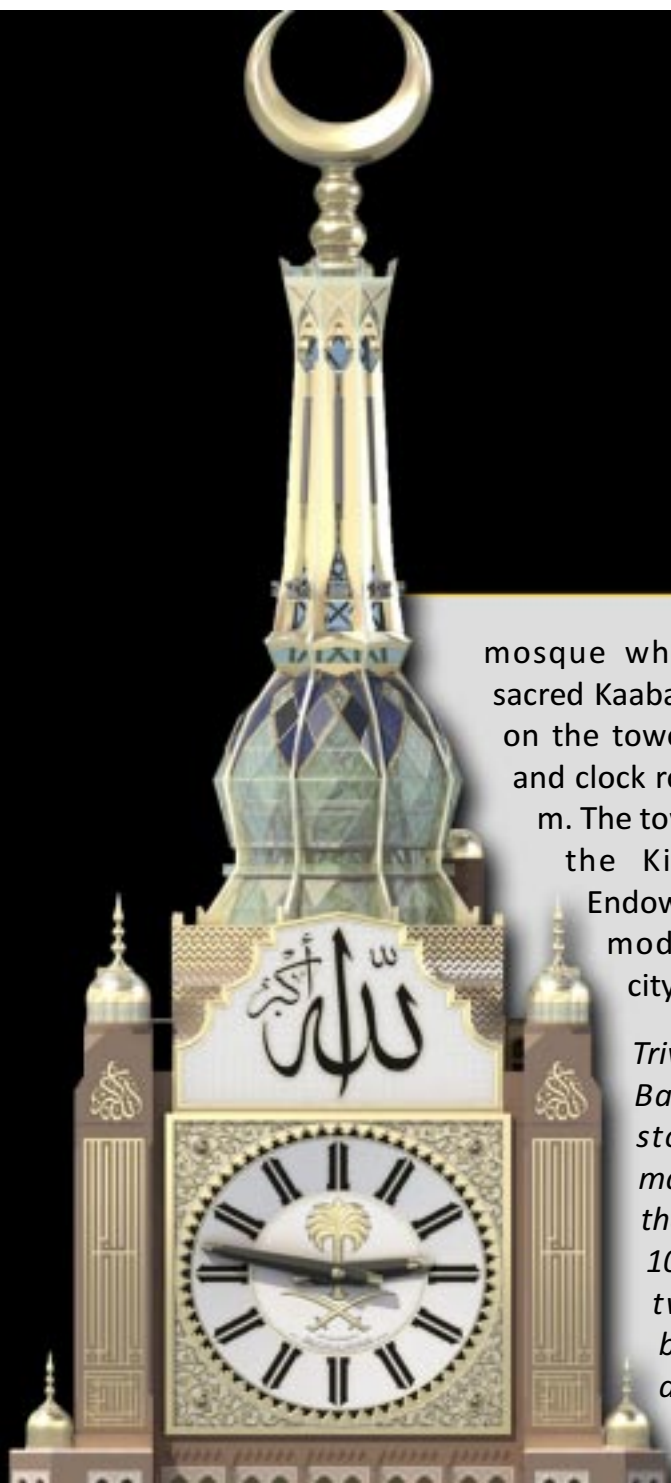
Trivia: Other famous neighbours on the Clock Tower on the defunct terminus include the Hong Kong Space Museum, Hong Kong Museum of Art and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.



Mecca Clock Tower, Saudi Arabia

The Mecca Royal Hotel Clock Tower or the Abraj Al-Bait Towers is the tallest clock tower in the world at 601 m. It is the third tallest freestanding structure in the world too. It is located just a few metres away from the most holy site of Islam, the Al-Haram





mosque which houses the sacred Kaaba. The clock faces on the tower are 43mX43m and clock roof stands at 530 m. The towers are a part of the King Abdul Aziz Endowment Project, to modernise the holy city for the pilgrims.

Trivia: The Abraj Al-Bait houses a 20-storey shopping mall, a prayer room that can hold up to 10,000 people and two heliports besides other amenities.

Peace Tower, Ottawa, Canada

This bell and clock tower is located in the middle of the Centre Block of the Canadian Parliament. It was so named to commemorate the end of the World War II. It is 92.2 m tall and houses the Memorial Chamber and the Carillon. There are several carvings on the tower including four gargoyles at the four corners of the tower. The clock faces are around five metres in diameter and illuminated at night. Atop the copper covered roof flutters a Canadian flag. The flagpole of the tower is the 'flagpole of the nation'.

Trivia: The Peace Tower is an icon of Canada and is found on the Canadian twenty-dollar bill.



Torre Del Reloj, Cartagena, Colombia

This clock tower was the main gateway to the old walled city and known as Bridge Gate. Built in the 18th century, this is designed in the gothic style with eight sides and four clock faces. Originally the tower had a weapons room and a chapel as well. The clock was

added later and the restoration of the tower completed in 1888 by Luis Felipe Jaspe. Today the Clock Tower is a major tourist attraction of Cartagena and the favourite backdrop of tourist photographs.

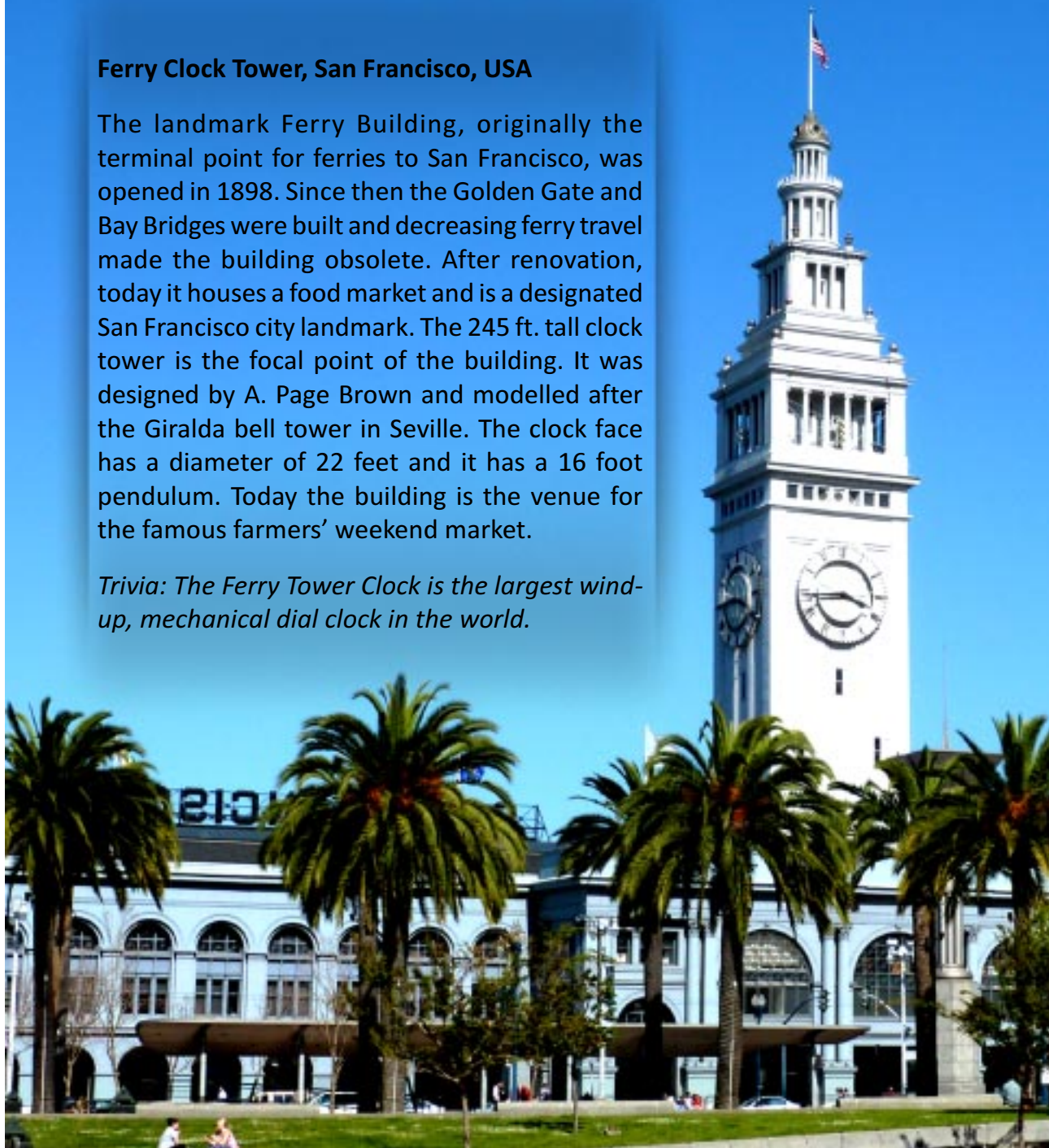
Trivia: Cartagena is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Ferry Clock Tower, San Francisco, USA

The landmark Ferry Building, originally the terminal point for ferries to San Francisco, was opened in 1898. Since then the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges were built and decreasing ferry travel made the building obsolete. After renovation, today it houses a food market and is a designated San Francisco city landmark. The 245 ft. tall clock tower is the focal point of the building. It was designed by A. Page Brown and modelled after the Giralda bell tower in Seville. The clock face has a diameter of 22 feet and it has a 16 foot pendulum. Today the building is the venue for the famous farmers' weekend market.

Trivia: The Ferry Tower Clock is the largest wind-up, mechanical dial clock in the world.




Country
Getaway



Malaysia

Truly Asia

A tropical beach scene with lounge chairs, a palm tree, and mountains in the background. The image shows a sandy beach with several dark-colored lounge chairs and small tables. A large white beach umbrella is open on the right. A tall palm tree is on the left. In the background, there is a clear blue ocean and a range of blue mountains under a bright blue sky with some white clouds.

Malaysia is a melting pot of different Asian cultures. It's also a popular holiday destination for its natural diversity. Plunge in to refresh your senses with the multicultural festivals rounding up the whole year. A tourism hot spot in the South China Sea, make Malaysia one of your must visit destinations in 2014, as the country celebrates the year as Tourism Malaysia Year. With thousands of hospitality professionals being trained for the occasion, it is the best year to visit Malaysia and get pampered to the limits as a tourist.

Climate

Like any tropical country, climate in Malaysia is characterised by its intense monsoon and above average humidity. And it is close to the equator. So be ready for that extra bright (hot) sun around the year (temperatures: 26 – 32 degree C). There are two monsoons, by the way: one, the ripping north-east monsoon (October - February), and the other milder from south-west (April - October). With rains flooding the east and west coasts alternatively in other times, only the months January till March suit a more favourable weather for touring the entire country. If you want drier climate, head towards higher lands like Cameron Islands and Fraser Hill.

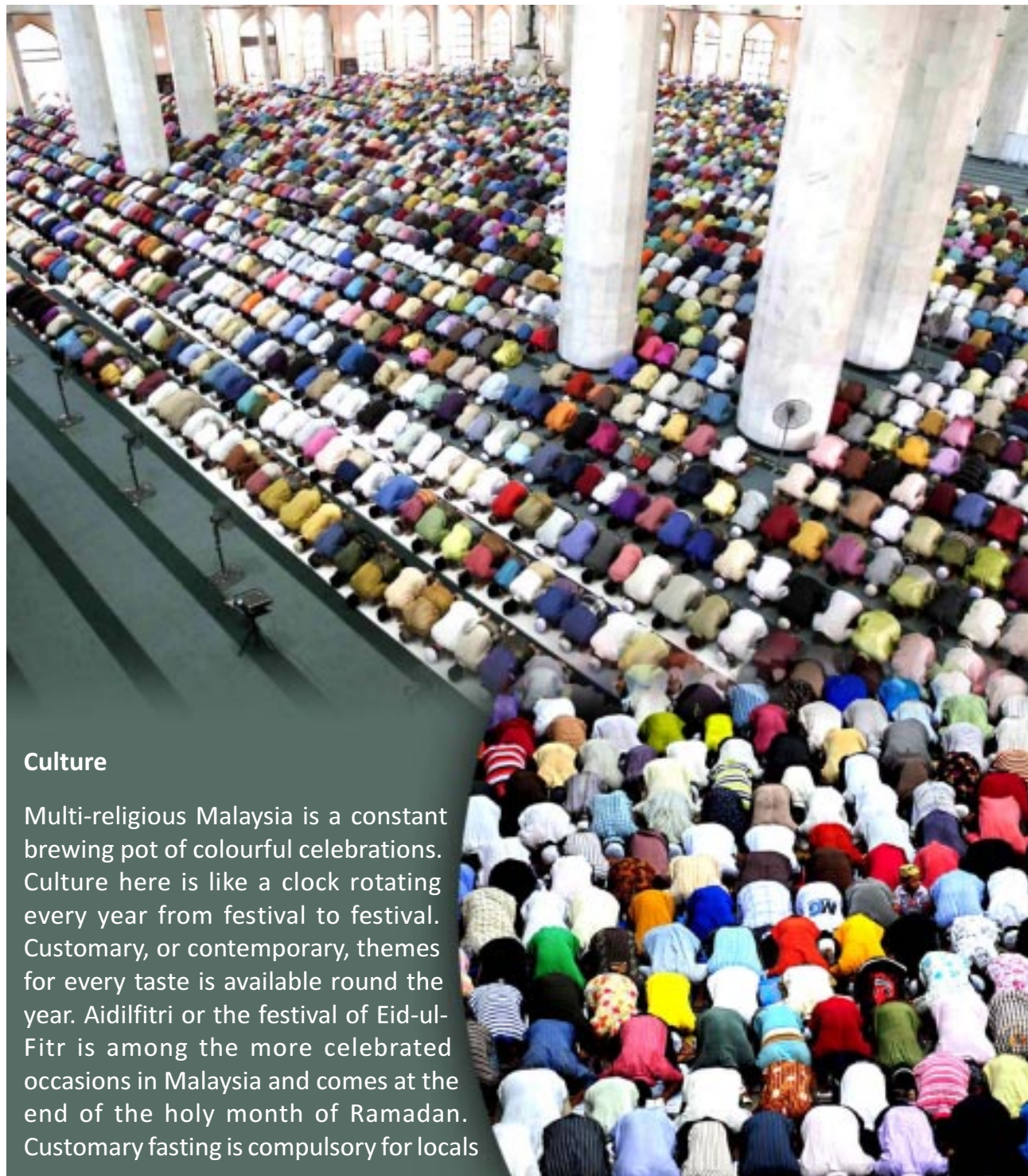


Must-Carry

If you are not accustomed to tropical weathers, then there are a few things that you must carry:

- SPF (40 onwards) for that extra heat during daytime
- Mosquito Repellents (creams or otherwise)
- Anti-diarrhoeal; precautions for regular stomach disorders and skin rashes
- Dark shades
- Light coloured clothes
- Water-proof backpacks





Culture

Multi-religious Malaysia is a constant brewing pot of colourful celebrations. Culture here is like a clock rotating every year from festival to festival. Customary, or contemporary, themes for every taste is available round the year. Aidilfitri or the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr is among the more celebrated occasions in Malaysia and comes at the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Customary fasting is compulsory for locals



while touring Muslims (Musafir) can or not partake in the rituals by their wish. Pregnant women are advised otherwise. Diwali or Deepawali, the lighting festival of the Hindus, is the other celebration worth a mention. Celebrated in the month of October/November, the dark night sky crusted with endless fireworks is a must-watch. Other festivals include Christmas, Thaipusam (January/February), Chinese New Year (January 31, 2014 – the year of the Horse), the Buddhist Wesak (May/June), Harvest Festival (May-end), Pesta Gawai (early June) and so on.



Places to see

Kuala Lumpur (KL) – A posh urban district and a shopping heaven: Kuala Lumpur is the dream city for modern tourism. Home to the Petronas Towers, the city can host all range of tourists. The old city centre, better known as Chinatown, is the commercial hub of KL. Bring out all your credit cards at Midvalley during Aidilfitri and Dipawali, and go home with your own box of surprises. Arresting landscapes of Batu Caves and Malaysian Forest Research Institute are the must see spots in the northern suburbs of the city.





Georgetown –

With an elusive history dating back to 1786, Georgetown is one of the earliest strait settlements along the South-East Asian coastline. It is also the state capital for Penang, and a declared UNESCO World Heritage Site for its ethnic glory. Lined up with museums and colonial urban

architectures,

it is a treasure trove for art miners. A walk down the street by the road stalls in Little India can turn into a rewarding shopping experience. Since the city is mostly closed during weekends, it is best time for you to head for Penang Hill. An aerial view of the city is only a bus and funicular ride away.




Melaka – Another UNESCO Site, this colonial port was the other oldest strait settlement for the Sultans, Dutch, Portuguese, and the British. Older parts of the city still teem with architecturally astounding buildings from the same era. An early morning walk in the suburban district provides brilliant captures. A trip around the main attractions of the city in an ornate Trishaw is an equally thrilling experience. Avoid Tuesdays. Most museums and art galleries are closed on that day.





Langkawi – According to myths surrounding the place, Langkawi was named after a wedding crasher party between two giant families. Coming to facts, it is a group of 99 islands off the western coast, also known as the “Jewel of Kedah”. Gunung Raya, standing at 881 m, is the highest peak and offers a mind-blowing view of the different shades of blue around the islands. The waterfall named the Telaga Tujuh or Seven Wells are said to be the bathing place for fairies. Langkawi is a nature lover’s as well as adventurers’ paradise. Take a peek at Crocodile Adventureland to know why. Known for their widely spread beaches, the islands are a den for water sports enthusiasts. Langkawi is also duty-free.



Cameron Highlands – It's a hill station in a coastal getaway. In Malaysia, impossible is nothing. Cameron Highlands is the highest point in the country, complete with tea estates, memorabilia museum, and guided tours covering the world's largest flower. Drier climate is only a bonus in an otherwise cosy romantic escapade.

Malaysia is as diverse in its events calendar as in its culture. While millions of hearts cry for the World War II veterans on Poppy Day (November 11), the country wakes up to life again in Asia's oldest keelboat sailing event, the Raja Muda Selangor International Regatta, later in the month. The F1 Petronas Towers Grand Prix holds breaths of restless race enthusiasts every year. Not keen on racing? Then of course you won't mind a little hand at shopping. The singular most important event, Malaysia Year-End Sale awaits you every year. Remember, offers are limited and your time is running out. See you there!



Travel *for* Tea

Tea tourism in Asia



Next to water, tea is the most popular non-alcoholic drink in the world. There are millions who swear by its revitalising properties, aroma and the unbeatable satisfaction a cup of tea gives. Most of us who reach out for our favourite cup are not aware that there are over a thousand varieties of teas in the world. The top tea producing regions of the world are located in Asia.

Tea plantations with their undulating rows of greenery sprawled over gentle hills also make beautiful travel destinations. Many people are waking up to this fact and 'tea tourism' is fast gaining popularity. If you love your morning cuppa, and would love to holiday in tranquil, green surroundings, read on to discover some hotspot destinations in Asia.





China

China tops the list of tea producers in the world, accounting for around 35 per cent of tea produced in the world. Depending on the location and method of processing, tea in China can be categorised in five broad types - green tea, black tea, white tea, oolong tea and post-fermented tea. Tea is the most popular drink in China with interesting ceremonies and etiquette attached to tea-drinking.

Some of the top tea-producing regions of China are Jiangbei, Jiangnan, southern China, south-west China, and the Yunnan province.

Tea Destinations to Visit: Yunnan Province, Hangzhou, Yellow Mountain, Chengdu.

Pick a Tour:

The Ancient Tea & Horse Caravan Road (WildChina)

This tour pays homage to an incredible, ancient journey when tea and horses were traded along a dangerous trail



stretched across south-west China through Tibet and down into India. The trail was called the “Eternal Road”. The modern day version of the tea and horse caravan route originates in south-west China, heads north towards the Ancient Tea and Horse Caravan Road to Shaxi and then to UNESCO World Heritage Site Lijiang and culminates in “Shangri-La”.





Seven Cups Tea Tour (Seven Cups)

Tour Highlights: Visit to Great Tang Dynasty Tribute Tea Museum and Purple Bamboo Shoot tea garden; visit An Ji, De Qing County (yellow tea), Yellow Mountain city, Qimen, Wuyi Mountain (wulong and black tea), Hangzhou.

4-Day the Essence Tour of Hangzhou (China Highlights)

Tour Highlights: The West Lake; Lingyin Temple, Six Harmonies Pagoda, Xixi National Wetland Park, Meijiawu Tea Village, Hu Qingyu Hall Chinese Traditional Herbal Medicine Museum, Former Residence of Hu Xueyan.



India

The second largest producer of tea in the world after China, India accounts for 20 per cent of the world's tea production. India is also the world's largest tea-drinking country. Tea was introduced in India by the British.

Top Tea Destinations: Assam, Darjeeling, Nilgiri Mountains, Munnar, Wayanad



Pick a Tour:

Assam: Located in north-eastern India, this hilly, rainy region is the largest tea-producing region of the world.

**Aromas of Tea Tour - 5 Nights/
6Days (Greener Pastures)**

Tour Highlights: Stay in the Mancotta Tea Heritage Bungalow in Dibrugarh, the tea capital of India; tea factory visit; plucking your own tea leaves; tea-tasting tour; visiting local villages; cultural activities; explore Dibrugarh.

Stay at Banyan Grove heritage



hotel, Gatoonga Tea Estate, Jorhat a 100 year old bungalow with lovely colonial décor and enjoy a lovely tea holiday.

Darjeeling: This lovely hill station in north-eastern India is famous for its aromatic, floral smelling teas.

The Tea Experience – half or full day tour (Glenburn Tea Estate)

Tour Highlights: Stay at the beautiful bungalows on the estate; audio-visual show on Glenburn history, stages of tea production; visit to tea gardens; learn about tea growing, plucking and care; picnic; visit to tea factory; tea tasting session.



Nilgiris: The Nilgiri Mountains in South India are famous for their aromatic teas, which have been growing here for over a hundred years.

Blue Mountains and High Tea Trip (Breakaway)

Tour Highlights: Travel from Coimbatore to the tea growing hill station of Coonoor in the Nilgiris; stay at a charming home

amidst tea plantation; Homedale tea factory tour with the host-planter as guide; local cheese-making visit; Wellington.

Glendale Plantation Stays

Highlights: Stay in the charming Runnymede Guest Houses in the Glendale tea estate; tea factory visit; trekking, local sightseeing.



Sri Lanka

The world's fourth largest producer of tea, Sri Lanka is famous for its high quality tea. Tea production was first introduced by the British. It is one of the major sources of foreign exchange today. The humid and cool climate of the central highlands of Sri Lanka with abundant rainfall is perfect for tea growing. Over one million people are employed in this industry today.



In a country where more than 4 per cent of the land is covered with tea estates, there are many beautiful tea holiday destinations. The main tea growing regions are Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Dimbula, Uda Pussellawa, Uva Province and Southern Province. Well known teas include the Ceylon black

tea, white tea and green teas.

Top Tea Destinations: Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Hatton&Dickoya, Morawaka, Tea Museum.



Pick a Tour:

Luxury Holidays (Tea Trails)

Tea Trails, located in the Ceylon tea region of Sri Lanka, is the world's first bungalow tea resort. Rubbing shoulders with the World Heritage Central Highlands, the tea heart-land of Sri Lanka, this region is 1250 m above sea-level. With any of the four lovely colonial bungalows as your base, you can explore the tea country. Tea Trail excursions include visits to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kandy (which houses the famous Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic); Nuwara Eliya or "Little England" (do not miss the 117-year old golf course); Adam's Peak and visits to tea estates, tea factory. You can also learn a lot about tea growing and manufacturing.



Through the Misty Mountains (Best of Lanka), 2 nights – 3 days

This lovely trail covers a rain forest trek, a walk along a colonial railway line used for tea transportation, tea plucking, overnight stay in a remote tea estate with delicious local cuisine.

Vietnam

In a country where tea has been cultivated for over 2000 years, tea is more than just a drink. It is a way of life. Tea is served at all occasions and increases bonhomie. Vietnam is the fifth largest tea producer in the world. Famous Vietnamese teas

include the specialty Shan Tuyet, sencha, fannings grade teas and lotus or jasmine flavoured green tea. Look out for the national Cheviet trademark on Vietnamese teas.

Major tea growing regions are the highlands region (Lam Dong), northwest region (Son La), Vietbac (Ha Giang), northeast region (Quang Ninh), northern midlands (Thai Nguyen) and north central region (Thanh Hoa).

Top Tea Destinations: Dalat (capital of Lam Dong), Thai Nguyen (Royal tea house), Bau Loc, Buon Ma Thuot.



Pick a tour

Tea Plantations, Dalat (City Pass)

Tour Highlights: Cau Dat tea plantation and tea factory; visit the tea plantations and learn all about tea making

Tea and Coffee Tour (Dalat Trip)

Tour Highlights: Cau Dat tea plantation and tea factory tour, French Quarter, Arabica coffee plantations, Tigers' Den Waterfall, Linh Phuoc Pagoda, Dalat Winery, Old Railway Station.

Indonesia

Indonesia is another primary tea producing country of the world with the Dutch introducing tea trade here. Black tea is the





main product here. Most of Indonesian teas are exported and used for blending. The climate and soil in Indonesia is different from other countries with regard to tea growing. Adaptations have been made to the hot and humid climate of this country and light, aromatic teas are successfully being produced here.

The main tea growing regions include West Java (70 per cent of the countries tea production), Central Java and North Sumatra.

Top Tea Destinations: Bandung, Gunung Mas Tea Estate (Puncak), Kayu Aro Tea Plantation (Jambi), Wonosobo.

Pick a Tour:

Gunung Mas: This beautiful tea plantation is a good spot for a short tea holiday. You can go on a tea plantation tour, tea factory tour, relax in the home stay in the plantation. Nearby attractions include the Indonesian Flower Garden, Puncak Pass and the Bogor Botanical Garden.

Tea Break

There are some ethereally beautiful places to visit in Asia for tea lovers. Mountain mists, rolling valleys, peace and beauty of nature all topped up with a steaming cup of lovely, aromatic tea. Head to any of these 'tea destinations' of Asia and take a real tea-break.



Myanmar

Hospitality & Tourism Conference 2014

17 - 19 February 2014

Traders Hotel, Yangon

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February 17 – 19, 2014

After the thumping success of the first and only travel and tour fair in the country, the Myanmar Hotel and Travel Conference (MHTC) is poised for a repeat performance in 2014. The MHTC is the annual platform for industry leaders from across the world to convene and discuss about the investment opportunities and outlook for Myanmar's hospitality and tourism industry. The MHTC is a composite fair of four different shows spread over three days (though on its inaugural year it was held over two day).

Myanmar has been on the periphery of economic activities from the time the military junta took over power and isolated the country. The hiccups during

Myanmar Hotel and Travel Conference (MHTC) 2014



the nation's transition to democracy notwithstanding things are becoming positive. Most business houses around the country as well as those far away are of the opinion that Myanmar is the new horizon to conquer.

Myanmar has shocked international audiences as the country transits rapidly into a forward looking nation hungry for success and development. With a milestone conquered in welcoming her 1 millionth foreign visitor, Myanmar tourism industry is now working overtime to meet this new demand that the country has never faced before.

In 2013, the country has uncovered

the potential that it has to offer. The inaugural event was officiated by H.E. U Htay Aung, Union Minister, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. About 300 senior level hospitality and tourism professionals from 17 countries attended the three-day conference held in Traders Hotel, Yangon.

The country witnessed not just one but three international hotel brands joining the growing hospitality sector in the previous year. This includes Best Western, Hilton and Novotel all set to be ready for business by the end of 2014. Locally, many hotels are gearing up by increasing the number of rooms, pushing up their standards and service quality to prepare



themselves for the greater influx of tourists. Even as more international brands names are fighting for a chunk of this pie, the local hoteliers are not backing down as we see them expanding their operations and taking advantage of their local business network for faster domination. With the upcoming SEA Games, ASEAN Summit and the long awaited ASEAN Tourism Forum, this is the country with golden opportunities for many to behold and exploit.

The second edition of Myanmar Hospitality and Tourism Conference promises to be yet another lively discussion of real opportunities and challenges surrounding Myanmar's

tourism development.

With so much happening and even more room to grow, the industry can look forward to exciting discussions and serious networking at Myanmar Hospitality and Tourism Conference 2014.

The four shows to be held during the event are: Myanmar Hospitality and Tourism Conference, Myanmar Travel Trade Show, Myanmar Hotels Solutions Show and Myanmar Food and Beverage Show.

Myanmar Hospitality and Tourism Conference is basically a fantastic opportunity for networking with other minor and major players in the sector. Get to know each other's strength and weaknesses as



well as what the ground realities are in Myanmar.

Myanmar Travel Trade Show is the opportunity for local travel value chain to meet with international buyers from the MICE, leisure and corporate travel industry. Take advantage of the buy-sell platform as you meet suppliers face to face and find out new travel products that are in the Myanmar market.

Myanmar Hotel Solutions and Food beverage shows are dedicated to the hotel and food segments of the industry. With the gradual opening of Myanmar's economy to the outside world, the industry that sees tremendous growth and greatest impact is the hospitality,

food and beverage and the tourism sector at large. As more international brands set foot in Myanmar to join the local hospitality scene, it forces all hotel players to work towards a gradual push for higher standards and better quality of service. Myanmar's tourism value chain from attractions to transportation to food and beverage is facing a demand surplus while the country continues to evolve into a more tourist friendly country.

An exciting time waits ahead for one and all associated with the travel and tourism industry as World Luxury Tourism, the media partner of the event brings you the nitty-gritty of the event.



February Festivals around the Globe

Groundhog Day

Where: Pennsylvania, USA

When: February 2, 2014

Based on a rodent's prediction of season change, Groundhog Day is an important festival of Pennsylvania. Legend has it that on Groundhog's Day if a groundhog emerges from its hole; it signifies the end of winter. However, if it sees its shadow and goes back to the hole, then winter continues for six more weeks. Every year the groundhog of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, Phil Sowerby makes his





appearance on Gobbler's Knob in the Pennsylvania Wilds. Thousands of people gather here to find out what the animal has in store for them on the season change. The whole idea was started by a local editor in 1887 who proclaimed on Candlemas that a local groundhog (named Phil after King Phillip) was capable of predicting the weather. The groundhog became famous and the rest is history.

Trivia: A popular Hollywood movie named the 'Ground Hog Day' was made portraying Phil!

St Valentine's Day

Where: Terni, Italy

When: February 14

Essentially a celebration of love, this festival is associated with St Valentine who is said to have united many lovers. In his hometown Terni, there is a grand celebratory feast around the Basilica di San Valentino, which contains the saint's remains. People gather around to enjoy various religious and cultural events. The

'Valentine Marathon' is a popular event as is the 'Cioccolentino', a 4-day chocolate market. There are games and workshops for couples, lovers and others as well.

Trivia: Valentine's Day has spawned a huge market for lovers' gifts with over 50 million of roses alone sold all over the world each year!



Pingxi Lantern Festival

Where: Taiwan

When: February 14, 2014

On the fifteenth day of the first Chinese Lunar Month, the Lantern Festival is celebrated in Pingxi, a small town in Taiwan. According to a legend, a Taoist deity the 'Great Emperor Heaven Official' visits the earth plane and blesses his devotees. On this day, once it is dusk, people



paint their wishes on beautiful paper lanterns and launch it in the sky. People choose specific colours for specific wishes. The fuel-propelled lanterns float up gently and glow like golden umbrellas against the dark night sky creating a magical effect. Folk arts and

performances, stalls selling lanterns, snacks and fireworks enliven the whole proceedings.

Trivia: Yuanxiao - sweet or savoury rice dumplings are traditionally eaten at this time!





Venice Carnevale

Where: Venice, Italy

When: February 15 – March 4, 2014

The world's most famous masked ball is celebrated to herald the arrival of spring. The gorgeously colourful masks and costumes are unrivalled in the whole world for their stunning loveliness and sheer creativity.





The centre of action is the Piazza San Marco and a fantastic masked procession starts off the festivities. Apart from the Grand Masked Ball, there are jousting events, musical and theatrical shows. Street performers add to the festive air.

Another highlight is the colourful procession of masked revellers in boats and gondolas gliding down the Grand Canal. The best costumes are awarded prizes.

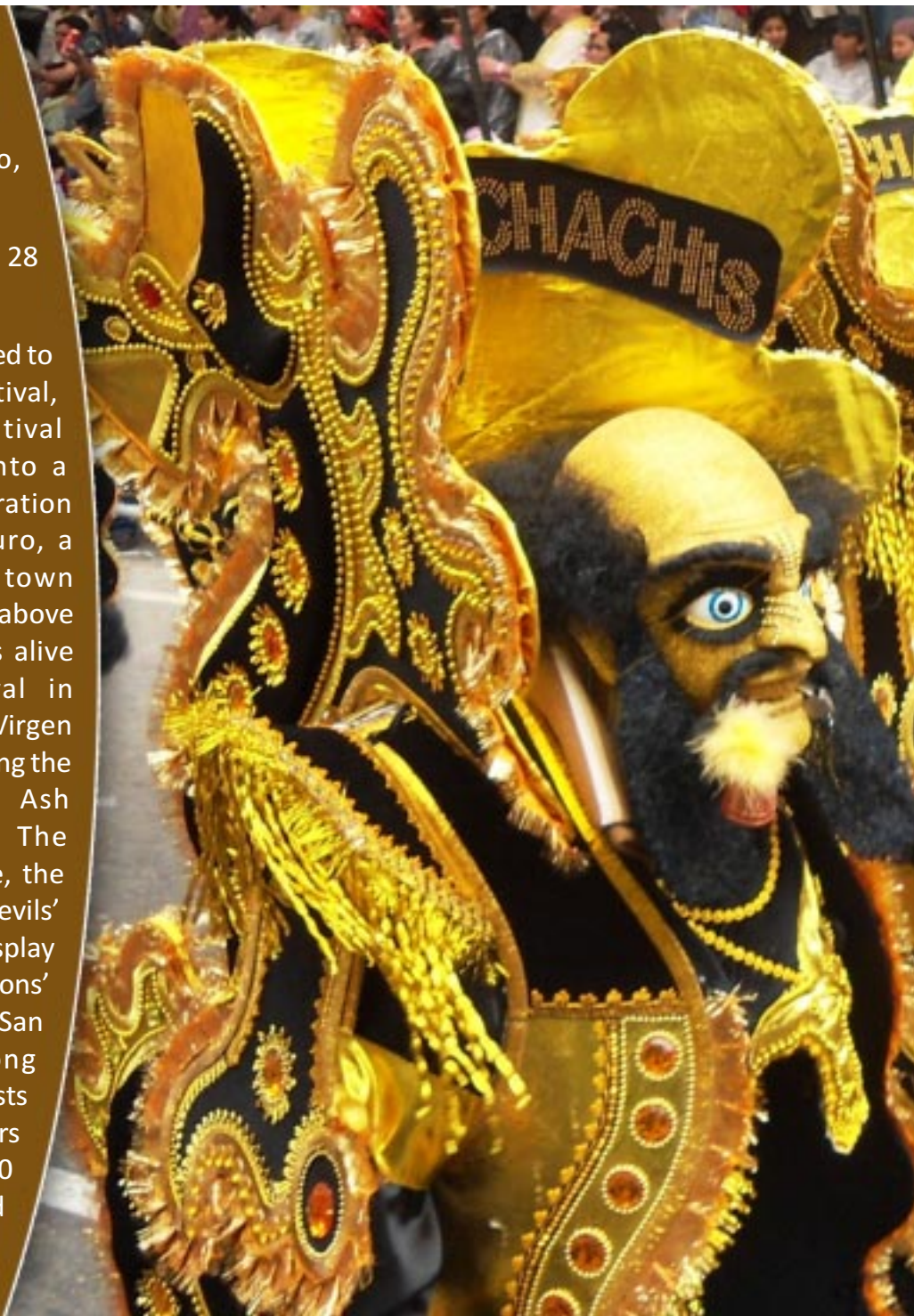
Trivia: The Pantalone, Bauta, Gnaga and Moreta are all different kinds of masks used in the carnival!

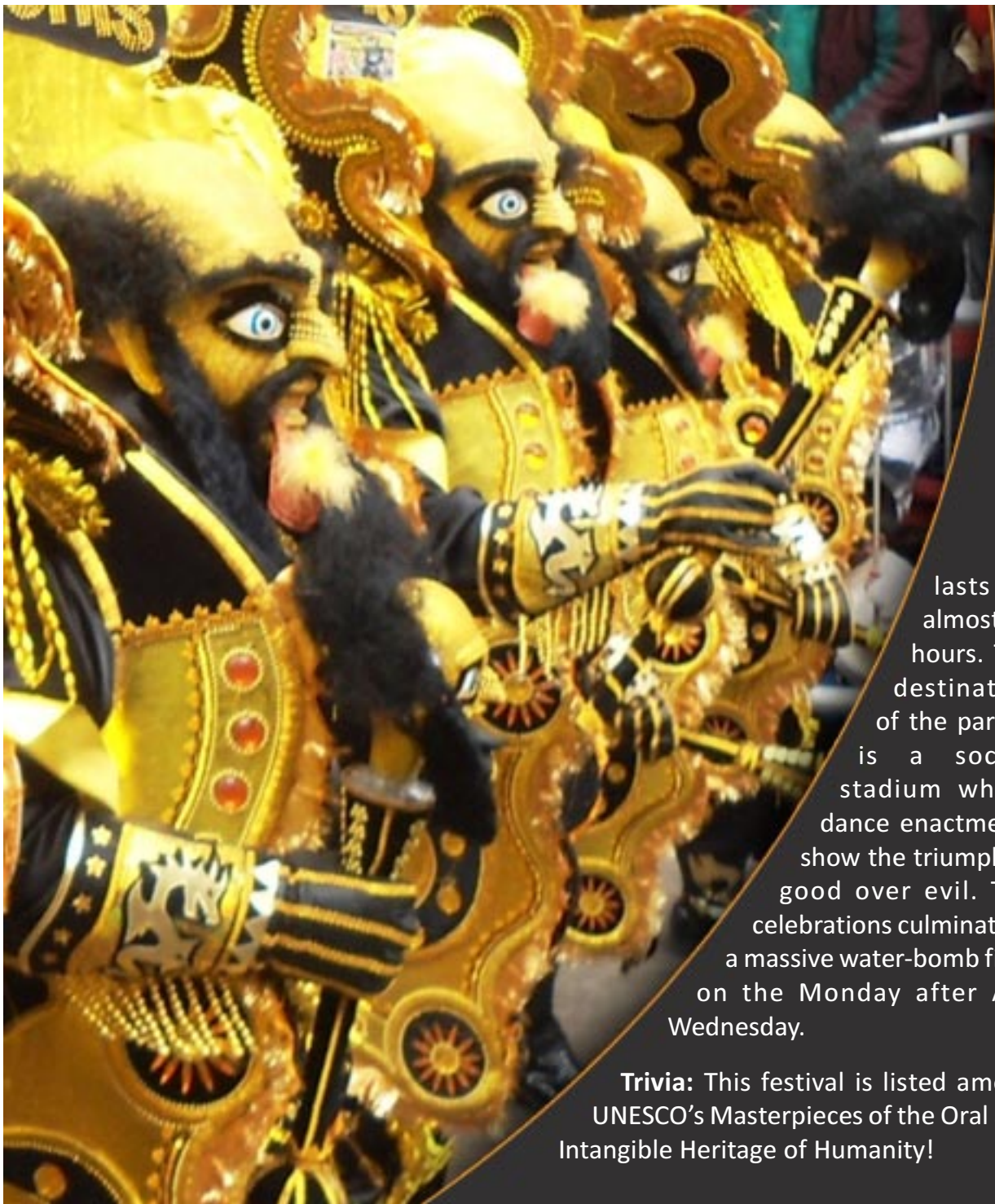
Oruro Carnival

Where: Oruro,
Bolivia

When: February 28
– March 4, 2014

Originally believed to be a native festival, the Oruro festival transformed into a Christian celebration over time. Oruro, a small mining town situated 3700 m above sea-level comes alive with a carnival in honour of the Virgen del Socavon during the days before Ash Wednesday. The highlight parade, the 'Dance of the Devils' is a fantastic display of people in demons' costumes led by San Miguel. The long procession consists of 20,000 dancers and 10,000 musicians and





lasts for almost 20 hours. The destination of the parade is a soccer stadium where dance enactments show the triumph of good over evil. The celebrations culminate in a massive water-bomb fight on the Monday after Ash Wednesday.

Trivia: This festival is listed among UNESCO's Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity!



Rio Carnaval

Where: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

When: February 28 – March 4, 2014

An explosion of colours, music, dance and the most dazzling display of costumes make the Rio Carnival one of the greatest shows of its kind on earth. Beginning a week before and culminating on Fat Tuesday, it is a week of unrestrained gaiety, free-flowing alcohol, feasting and revelry. The bandas or street parties march through the streets led by drummers and singers and trailed by enthusiastic crowds who join the fun. There are gorgeous, raunchy balls, street parties (blocos) and parades. The revelry concludes with the grandest

parade - the samba parade where samba schools compete with one another to put on the best show. The pulsating music, the rhythmic dances and the highly effervescent spirits of the participants and onlookers combines to create sheer magic. This is one time when restraint is thrown to the winds and people throw themselves into having the greatest time of their life.

Trivia: The Sambodromo - a massive parade area was specifically built for the samba parade and can hold up to 90,000 people!



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