



World

Luxury Travel

Magazine

Vol. 3 ■ Issue 12 ■ July, 2015

Auburn Autumn

Best fall destinations in Asia

**Five Luxury Limousine
Services in Bangkok**

**Hotels in Europe for the
Muslim Traveller**

August Festivals around the Globe



Autumn with all its lovely hues of red and yellow has arrived. Previously, we talked about the best fall destinations in different parts of the world. This time we are visiting a few beautiful destinations in Asia.

In our cover story, you will find some of the best spots to enjoy the autumn auburn and some of the breath-taking landscapes of Asia.

While traveling, nothing can beat a luxurious stay at a place that serves your preferred food. In this issue of the e-zine we are talking about the best hotels to stay for our Muslim travellers in Europe. These hotels are not only the epitome of luxury, but also are the best places for food. These hotels take special care in serving halal food to their guests on request. Other religion specific requests and requirements are met with too!

Luxury travel starts with luxurious modes of transport. Limousine services provide the most comfortable transit from one place to another by road. Bangkok is a city with a number of limousine service providers. However, it is impossible to know which one would give the expected service. In our feature coverage, we are talking about five limousine service providers in Bangkok whom you can rely on for seamless services. Read on to pick the one that fits the bill.

Happy travels!

Thank you!

Manashree Prakash
Editor-in-Chief

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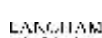
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Auburn Autumn

Best fall destinations in Asia

Some say transition is better than a beginning or an end. Beginnings overwhelm you with hope while endings seal the fate. A transition on the other hand just lets you be. Autumn is one such perfect respite between the long, sunny days of summer frolic and winter frenzy in a blanket of snow. It neither brings with it lofty expectations to find love like spring nor does it rush you to chase liberty like the monsoon. Autumn is relaxing, tolerant and infinitely patient. It gives you all the time in the world to appreciate the beauty of the gradual changing of colours and lets you wander about aimlessly before you are ready to turn into a new leaf.

As travellers go out in search of attractions during fall that are complete with romantic walks, pleasant weather, vibrant landscapes and a changing scenery, we bring you the best foliage destinations of Asia:



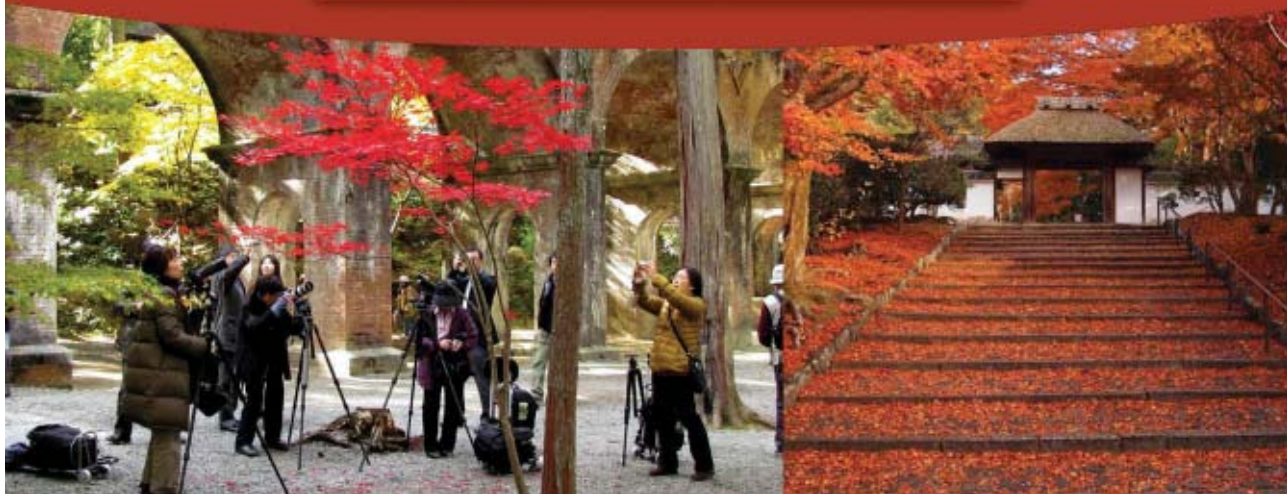
Kyoto, Japan

Autumn leaf viewing or “Momiji-gari” is a popular activity that began in the historical times in Japan. First started by the noble family, it now draws tourists from all over the world. The city of Kyoto is a renowned foliage attraction. Colourful leaves (koyo) begin to peep from the trees in mid-September. By the onset of winter they envelop the surroundings in hues of yellows and reds. The Japanese maple trees in crimson are scattered liberally in every temple, shrine and garden of Kyoto. The Tofuku-ji





Temple, Nanzen-ji Temple, Ginkaku-ji Temple, Honen-in Temple, Takao, and Okochi-Sanso Villa are the popular foliage spots while the secluded ones include Shinyodo Temple, The Kyoto Gyoen, Kurama-dera Temple etc. From vibrant yellows, flaming oranges to eye scorching reds, Kyoto presents a brightly painted canvas.



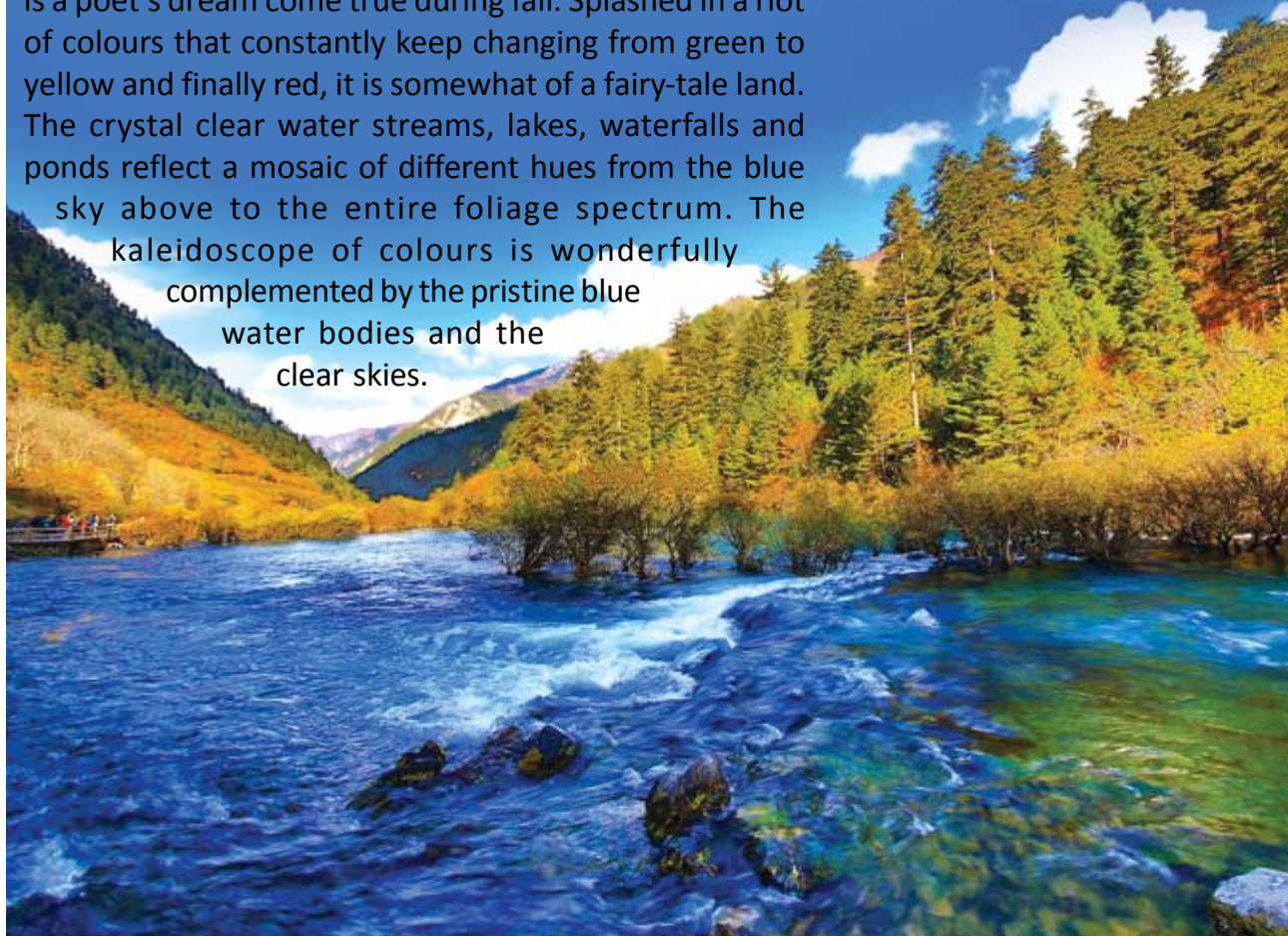
Daisetsuzan National Park, Hokkaidô, Japan

The leaf changing season kick starts from the mid to late September in Daisetsuzan National Park every year. Hike your way to the higher regions near Mount Asahidake, Ginsendai or Kogen Onsen to soak up the breath-taking views. The yellow leaves of the golden birches, crimson cover of the mountain ash trees and the green needles of dwarf stone pines put up a mesmerising display.



Jiuzhaigou Valley, Sichuan, China

The Jiuzhaigou Valley in the south-western Chinese province of Sichuan is a poet's dream come true during fall. Splashed in a riot of colours that constantly keep changing from green to yellow and finally red, it is somewhat of a fairy-tale land. The crystal clear water streams, lakes, waterfalls and ponds reflect a mosaic of different hues from the blue sky above to the entire foliage spectrum. The kaleidoscope of colours is wonderfully complemented by the pristine blue water bodies and the clear skies.



Fragrant Hills Park, Beijing, China

The Fragrant Hills Park or the Xiangshan Park lies at around 10 kilometres to the west of Beijing. Due to its high elevation and dense cover of trees, it is a treat for visitors in autumn. From the middle October to early November, it is bathed in a hood of red leaves which attracts plenty of tourists. It is an important site of temples, historical relics, gardens, lakes, forests and peaks. The Tranquillity Green Lake, Fragrant Hills Temple, Heshun Gate and the Xiangwu Ku are the best places to admire the red leaves.





Seoul, South Korea

Cradled between humid summers and icy winters, autumn comes across as a breath of fresh air in Seoul. The fiery colours transform the region into a wonderland of sorts. The Jeongdong-gil road or the Deoksugung Doldam-gil road along Deoksugung Palace's stone wall is one of the most romantic spots you can visit. The 900

metres long pathway strewn with yellow ginkgo leaves is a sight to behold. The Seoul Museum of Art with its 500-year-old maple tree and quiet garden is another favourite. The other ideal hubs include the road from Gyeongbok Palace to Samcheong Park and from East Tower in Jongno to Samcheong Tunnel as well as the Gilsangsa Temple, Bongeunsa Temple and Garosugil street etc.





The fascinating part of the fall season is how it lets the leaves show their true colours and take centre stage after being overshadowed by the blossoming flowers for most of the year. Autumn never makes a dazzling entry that blinds your senses, it reveals itself rather slowly but promises to enrapture you once in full form. If you pause a bit to pick up a brightly hued leaf from its foliage carpet, breathe in its crisp air or admire your glowing surroundings, know that autumn has gently whispered its secret to you. Take part in its carnival of colours as long as it lasts.



Five Luxury Limousine Services *in* Bangkok





The city of Bangkok sports myriad shades of life. It has the habit of engulfing its visitors in its colourful world. Travellers bask in the beauty and luxury of the city and tend to forget a thing or two in their checklist. Bangkok is a treat for travellers looking for a luxurious experience. From staying at the luxurious Four Seasons hotel, enjoying

a private tour of Bangkok's Khlongs, to dining at the Baan Khanitha, Bangkok offers it all. If you would love to enjoy Bangkok at its luxurious best, the right thing to do would be to hire a reliable luxury limo service. There are various limo services in Bangkok, which offer quality service. Here are five of the bests.



SPlimousine.com

Thailand Limousines

If you want to enjoy the luxurious experience of a limo ride on the streets of this vivacious city, then you can make Thailand Limousines your aide. One of the premier limousine services in Bangkok, they offer the Lincoln Town Car Limousine, which is one of the most famous limousines in the market. These limousines have a controllable privacy divider that provides the passenger with the much-needed privacy from the driver's area in front. Other facilities include, customized sound system, mini-bar in the car, built-in TV with CD/DVD players and many more. If you need an airport pick-up then you can trust them to provide you with the best service. Experienced drivers, who have a complete low-down of flight delays or cancellations, help you out in emergencies. Enjoy the wonderful beaches of Hua Hin, Cha Am, Pattaya, Koh Chan or Rayong with a beautiful limousine as your companion.

S.P. Limousine

S.P. Limousine can be another great option for you if you are looking for a reliable limousine service in Bangkok. One of the biggest players in the car hire market, S.P. Limousine has a four-pronged service structure. They provide standard cars, luxury Cars, VIP vans and Luxury Alphards (Toyota). They also provide users with luxury coaches, which can be used to hold conferences and seminars. The luxury limousines which

they provide can also be used for a fun-filled family tour of Bangkok. You can sit back and enjoy your ride to the Grand Palace or the Wat Pho, and make your Bangkok trip a memorable one. S.P. Limousine has a responsive and warm customer service set-up, which always sees to it that the passenger gets the best out of the services provided.





The Siam Resorts Group Limousine Services

A luxury limousine service, which is provided by a luxury resort group, can definitely be counted upon as a reliable one. The Siam Resorts Group Limousine service is one such limo service in Bangkok. It has a touch of class attached

to it. This company makes sure that you enjoy the city to the fullest and marvel at the city's attractions and the beaches. If you want to visit some of the lesser known places such as Koh Chang, Kanchanaburi, Ayutthaya or Ban Krut, you can trust them to take you there comfortably. By recruiting only English-speaking chauffeurs, they also make sure that you don't have to face any language barrier.

First Class Bangkok

This aptly named limousine service can surprise you with its services as it is manned by some of the most experienced travel entrepreneurs in the city. Each and every car comes with an experienced chauffeur, who can communicate in English, making things easier for foreign travellers. If you are visiting the city for the first time then it would be a wise decision to go for First Class Bangkok.

Some of the client testimonials also suggest that they are punctual, quick, resourceful and pay extra attention to the safety and security of the passengers. To top it all, they will also welcome you with a chilled beer of your own choice. Imagine vrooming past the beautiful Giant Swing, sipping your favourite drink in the luxury and comfort of a limousine!



The Oriental Trans and Car Service Company Limited

This 24-hour limousine service has earned many accolades from their passengers because of their premium services. They have been providing limousines and other luxury cars to the who's who of the city and have also been the travel partners for various luxury hotels. They have a fleet of some of the most luxurious car brands such as Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, BMW, etc. Each and every car has limousine management software, which is integrated





with the GPS and the GPRS system, making the cars much more passenger-friendly. They also provide special tour packages for travellers who want to enjoy the beauty of the city. There are many packages, which include tourist attractions like the river and canal tour, Temple of Dawn, Ayutthaya, and many other spots. Moreover, they have experienced and qualified chauffeurs that adds to their list of brownie points.

Hotels in Europe

for the

Muslim Traveller

It's one thing to just pack your bags and hit the road without having a destination in mind. There are some travellers who swear by this type of travel routine. However, there are some, who are a bit more particular about the

planning process. These are the travellers who sometimes get the best out of a place, a hotel, a restaurant, a spa and everything that can possibly be there in a travel itinerary. They research well before travelling and make sure that they are at the right place at the right time. So if you are planning for your next holiday or business

trip to Europe, and you want to know the whereabouts of some of the luxury hotels in Europe, which serve authentic halal food, you are at the right place.

Here are five luxury hotels in Europe where you will not only find authentic and delicious halal food, but various other facilities, which are specially designed to delight Muslim visitors.



The Landmark, London

If you are in London, then you can choose The Landmark for your stay. It has the classical English charm that will enchant you the moment you enter the premises. More importantly, you will find authentic halal food here too. The Landmark is widely known for its award winning teas, which have received rave reviews and won the hearts of many visitors. It is also known for its world renowned health spa, which can make your stay not only blissful and luxurious, but healthy as well. However, what makes The Landmark one of the best options in London for Muslim travellers is its halal food. It has a wide range of dishes that can satisfy many a bon vivant. Apart from that they have various other services such as special Arabic television channels, and a delicious Middle Eastern menu, featuring an eclectic mix of Muslim cuisine.



Hotel Fouquet's Barriere, Paris

Once you are done enjoying a wonderful day at one of the most beautiful and romantic cities in the world, you can choose the Hotel Fouquet's Barriere to spend the night. Famous for its luxurious and spacious rooms, which are decorated with mahogany and silk, this stunning hotel is located right on the corner of Avenue des Champs-Élysées and Avenue George. This Five Star luxury hotel has all the necessary facilities to satisfy a Muslim visitor. If you are looking for prayer mats in your room, the staff of this hotel will make sure that you get that. They can even manage to arrange for copies

of the Quran in your room. Moreover, Hotel Fouquet's Barriere is also known for its Muslim cuisine, which comprises of authentic halal food.



HÔTEL
FOUQUET'S BARRIÈRE
PARIS



Le Richemond, Geneva

If the breath taking view of Lake Geneva from your veranda or the fact that you could be staying in the same room where Louis Armstrong and Charlie Chaplin had stayed is not enough, then Le Richmond has many other facilities to woo you. It looks stunning in its Art deco design; it has a wonderful gourmet restaurant called Le Jardin that serves authentic halal food



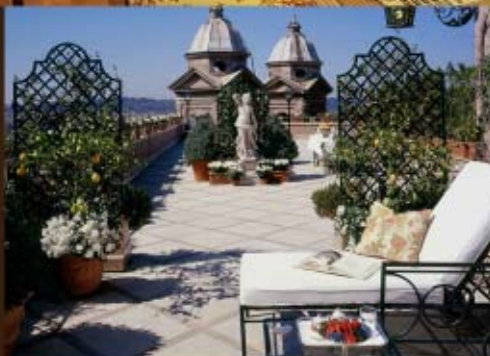
for Muslim travellers. The hotel also offers various other facilities such as a copy of the Quran in the room, bidets in the bathrooms, a non-alcoholic mini-bar and a female-only spa to cater to Muslim guests.





Hotel Hassler, Rome

It's not necessary that when you are in Rome, you have to do just as the Romans do. You can choose to be yourself and do whatever you like. Located near the Colosseum, overlooking the famous Spanish Steps, the Hassler hotel is one of the leading hotels in Rome and is certainly one of the most Muslim-friendly hotels in Europe. The management has taken special attention in providing Muslim visitors with an array of in-room facilities like Arabic Television channels, books, and even bidets in bathrooms. The hotel has an expansive menu



of authentic halal food for the Muslim foodies. Moreover, if you are looking for female only housekeeping or room staff, then you can get it easily at the Hassler.

There are many other hotels in Europe, which offers authentic halal food and also cater to Muslims with an array of services and facilities. So, next time you are in Europe with your backpack or Attaché, and looking for a luxury hotel that offers great halal food, you know where to go.



August Festivals around the Globe





Medellin Flower Festival

Place: Medellin, Colombia

Dates: August 3 – 12, 2015

One of the loveliest festivals depicting the culture of Colombia, the Medellin Flower Festival is a ten day celebration of beauty and of life itself. The festival has over 140 events but the show-stealer is the flower bearer's parade. Dazzling displays of flower arrangements mounted on huge circular contraptions (silleta) are carried by rural flower farmers on their backs. Not a mean feat, considering that a silleta, using up to 70 different types of flowers and with a

diameter of up to 5 m, can weigh up to 70 kilos! There are other events too, including the popular Trova Festival, the horse parade, the classic car parade and the music concerts. The flower arrangements depict the history and life of the people and as such the festival is recognised as the cultural heritage of Colombia.

Trivia: *The festival is said to hold two Guinness Book of World Records titles!*



Mt Hagen Cultural Show

Place: Papua New Guinea

Dates: August 15 – 16, 2015

This exotic cultural show is a showcase of the country's best sing-sings (tribal groups) coming together in an explosion of colours, costumes and artistic performances. Villagers from all around the region come here to display their cultural heritage- dance, music and costumes. First staged in 1964, the event was started in an effort to bring together warring tribes and promote their

culture. Today the event is a breath-taking display of local culture. The costumes, consisting of body paint, spectacular head-dresses, feathers, leaves and shells are eye-catching. The rhythmic drumming, dancing and chanting music are spell-binding. The tempo of the beats, the vivid colours and the pulsating enthusiasm make this an interesting event for those who are looking for somewhat offbeat happenings and destinations.

Trivia: *It is best to take the Trans Niugini Tours to enjoy this festival.*



Seven Sisters Festival

Place: Hong Kong

Dates: August 20, 2015

The Qi Xi or the Seven Sisters Festival is the Chinese equivalent of Valentine's Day. Dedicated to lovers and singles, the festivities take place all over the country. Newly-weds and singles congregate

mainly at Hong Kong's Lovers' Rock. The festival traces its origins in an ancient legend according to which seven fairy sisters came down to earth to bathe. A cowherd stole the clothes of the seventh sister forcing her to marry him as a result.



The couple lived happily for three years when the heavenly wife was ordered back. The Queen Mother of Heaven drew a line across the sky to separate the lovers. The girl was allowed to meet her husband only once a year. In memory of the young lovelorn couple, celebrations are held till today. Young girls make offerings of joss sticks, fruits, flowers and even face powder. Maidens wishing to attract potential husbands display their domestic skills in the form of embroidery and knitting. Rooftops, backyards and gardens are all popular venues for holding the celebrations.

Trivia: *The couple could meet only on the seventh day of the seventh moon on a bridge formed by thousands of magpies!*





Zurich Street Parade

Place: Zurich, Switzerland

Dates: August 29, 2015

One of the most popular techno parades in Europe, the Zurich Street Parade was first held in 1992. It was officially a demonstration for love, peace, freedom and tolerance, and resonates with the same values even today. The 2.4 km long parade route in the Lake Zurich area, is packed with 30 Love mobiles (decorated mobile trucks) equipped with massive music systems, 7 big stages. Up to a

million visitors including DJs, dance fans and music and party loving crowds flock to be enthralled by the latest electronic music, live shows, multimedia and dance animations. Hundreds of parties are held through the weekend. This vibrant electronic music and arts events transforms Zurich into a colourful, lively dance floor. The spirit of safe fun permeates the entire festival, promoted through a list of do's and don'ts. Drugs, violence, drunken behaviour are eschewed and clean fun gets promoted.



Trivia: *This is a non-profit event with world class DJs performing free of charge!*

World Bog Snorkelling Championship

Place: Wales

Dates: August 30, 2015

This one takes the cake as far as quirky sports go. The smallest town in Britain, Llanwrytd Wales in Powys, Wales is witness to this whacky event every year in August Waen Rhydd Peat Bog. The scene of action is a 55 m stretch of murky bog waters, where contestants have to race! The catch lies here – regular swimming strokes are forbidden,



only flippers and snorkels are allowed. Contestants participate under various categories including Men, Ladies, Junior and Local. Another associated event is the Mountain Bike Bog Snorkelling. There is a costumed racing event too. The event is pretty popular considering that it has a place in the World Alternative Games.

***Trivia:** This year will see the 30th World Bog Snorkelling Championship being held!*





World Luxury Tourism