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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Kochi features in Conde Nast Traveller's best places to visit in Asia in 2024**

**Kochi, Nov 17:** In a massive endorsement of Kerala's resurgent tourism, the vibrant city of Kochi has been featured in Conde Nast Traveller's list of the best places to visit in Asia in 2024.

Heaping praise on Kochi for its sustainable initiatives and local festivals, the London-based luxury travel magazine also mentions the city's waterways, verdant backwaters, lagoons and rivers, which have lured visitors for centuries – from Arab, Chinese and European merchants in the 1300s to modern-day travellers.

“As one of the first in the world, its water metro system—a socially inclusive transport option connecting 10 islands along a 78-kilometre network—was already revolutionary when it launched in 2021, but will set the bar even higher by late 2024, when it becomes fully solar powered,” it says,

Conde Nast points out that the move is part of a wider effort to transform Kerala's financial and industrial capital into a solar powerhouse. The city's international airport (CIAL) is the first in the world to operate solely on solar energy and was recently upgraded with the introduction of a dedicated business jet terminal that is the largest in India.

“On a wider scale, Kerala Tourism 2.0, the state's \$43 million 2023-2024 sustainable tourism initiative, will focus on improving infrastructure and travel corridors between Kochi and less-visited destinations such as Munnar and Kozhikode—as well as local festivals, from the ancient temple gathering of Thrissur Pooram to the Kochi-Muziris Biennale,” according to the magazine.

An exultant Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas said it is a huge accolade for Kerala Tourism which has always strived to strike a judicious balance between the commercial growth of tourism and its sustainability to ensure participation and well-being of local communities.

Tourism Secretary Shri Biju K said, “Our sustainable initiatives in tourism sector have made not only Kochi but the entire state a welcoming destination for travellers from across the world.”

The magazine also refers to improvements that are underway at Kochi's 150-year-old Ernakulam Market, which is set to unveil its years-in-the-making redesign in early 2024.



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Tourism Director S Prem Krishnan said, “The endorsement by Conde Nast Traveller is a testament to our transformative initiatives with full respect to surrounding ecology.”

Conde Nast also pays tribute to responsible tourism operator The Blue Yonder, which created a twilight dining experience inspired by Kochi’s historic Chinese fishing nets in 2023 in Ezhikkara. The innovative travel company, which offers opportunities to experience conservation-focused mangrove trails and climate-resilient Pokkali rice farms, also revamped 2023-2024 Nila River voyages: two-week odysseys along the state’s cultural lifeline, from the Palakkad gap to Ponnani.

Also featuring in the magazine’s list are Kathmandu Valley (Nepal); Singapore; The Silk Road, Uzbekistan; Kobe, Japan; Bangkok (Chinatown), Thailand; Mongolia; Ras Al Khaimah, the UAE; The Red Sea, Saudi Arabia; Da Nang, Vietnam; and South and Central Sri Lanka.

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