

Responsible tourism to gain popularity in 2019

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As the new year begins, travel experts feel responsible tourism or travelling for a cause is likely to gain momentum among Indians in 2019.

"Travellers including mostly the millennials, in India as well as globally, consider themselves equally responsible for the disaster and duty-bound to reverse it. This year we will see a spurt in the number of responsible travellers demanding for sensitive travel packages as well as sustainable operators to ensure a guilt-free tour. They will take the centre stage in 2019," Cox and Kings Group CEO Peter Kerkar said.

Plastic-free travel, voluntourism, sustainable and green tours are predicted to be extensively used terms in

the travel space, he added.

Echoing a similar view, FCM Travel Solutions - Indian Subsidiary of Flight Centre Travel Group, Australia, managing director Rakshit Desai said with growing awareness and a need to give back to the community and environment, there are citizens across the world that are waking up to 'Voluntourism'.

"We believe that 2019 will see growing commitment and support from Indian travellers for such tours. They usually travel solo with strong positivity and cherish the enrichment that volunteerism brings.

"The volunteering activities could range from environment cleaning, helping locals from a calamity or disaster, staying in eco-friendly hotels among others," he added. Booking.com coun-

try manager, India, Sri Lanka and Maldives, Ms Ritu Mehrotra said, 2019 is set to see a lot of exciting developments in the Indian travel space.

"Reflecting increased global interest in social issues such as human rights, equality and working conditions, 2019 will see the rise of a more conscious traveller, who will ask more questions around social, political and environmental issues in potential travel destinations before deciding on where to visit," she added.

Almost 69 per cent Indian travellers take social issues into account when choosing a holiday destination, while 70 per cent of them choose not to travel to a destination if they feel it will have a negative effect on the people who live there, according to Booking.com data.