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■ For Moms Who Want To Take Some Time Off

By Seema Prasad | Published: 03rd December 2015 05:27 AM Last Updated: 03rd December 2015 05:27 AM

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A group of women exploring Ladakh

BENGALURU: To break the taboo of women travelling alone, in Indian, F5 Escapes, a travel company, tailor makes group travel packages for women. “After the Nirbhaya rape incident, India has emerged as an unsafe country for women. I wanted to give women the liberty to travel freely,” says Malini Gowrishankar, Founder.

It all started when she shared a post on Facebook expressing a desire to go on a trip to Sikkim. “Two Facebook friends, who were not more than acquaintances responded. We then explored the north east state and came back countless memories,” she said.

F5 Escapes, has now organised 75 tours for women in two years. The most successful being trip to Pondicherry, Auroville and Andamans.

“In Kutch, we went to Gil Kutch and met Bathi artists. We experienced the salt deserts and also interacted with the locals,” she says.

“Teracotta making, INTACH walk inside the villages and candle making sessions were arranged for the group that went to Pondicherry. Neil, one of the off beat destinations in Andamans, is always



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on itinerary of travellers for its wider beaches,” she says.

“We don’t take more than ten women, as we don’t want to compromise on their safety. We always stay at homestays. The trips are planned with the help of the families who the group stays with. We consult them on where to go to get the best experience of the place,” Malini explains.

She has seen women face a lot of resistance to the idea of travelling alone. “They always need to ask their husband and in laws before they sign up for trip. It’s more difficult for mothers to leave their children, than it is for children to leave their mothers,” she says.

Upper middle class women are their target group. And not the usual adventure junkies who go on trips. “We want to give them a sense of self-worth and let go of their inhibitions. I think women should take some time off for themselves and travel more frequently,” Malini says.

A lot of people also gift trip to their family members here. A husband gifted his wife a trip to Pondicherry. And a daughter gifted her parents a anniversary package. “We made sure that our team including the help and driver wished her,” recalls Malini.

Malini worked in IT industry for seven years. She later gave voice overs for several advertisements in Tamil. Her most noteworthy contribution is for Flipkart advertisement. A team of ten people manage the show at F5.



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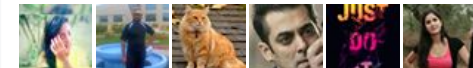
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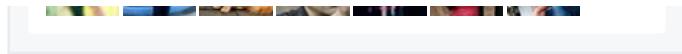
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